
A
VINDICATION
OF THE
Mosaic HISTORY
OF THE
FALL.

1774
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OF THE

MOJAVE HISTORY

OF THE

FALL

Vol. 2

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ESSAY
TOWARDS A
VINDICATION
OF THE
VULGAR EXPOSITION
OF THE
Mosaic **HISTORY**
OF THE
FALL of Adam.

In Several LETTERS,

By *JO. WITTY*, late of St. John's
College in Cambridge.

Vol 2

L O N D O N :

Printed by W. B. for John Wyat at the Rose in St.
Paul's Church-Yard; and Sold by Tho. Baxter
Bookseller in York, 1725,

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 By JO. WILKINS, late of St. John's
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~~or otherwise~~
~~their~~
~~but such~~
~~what is equally~~
~~to~~
P R E F A C E.

THE Design of the following
 Book is declar'd not far from
 the beginning of the Book it self;
 it is to vindicate *The Vulgar Histori-
 cal Exposition of the Mosaic Ac-
 count of the Fall of Adam*: To re-
 cover out of the hands of those who
 would turn it into an unintelligible
 Fardle of Chimeras, part of the eld-
 est, and one of the most valuable,
 Pieces of History in the whole
 World. A Memorial which, in its
 Historical Construction, has all pos-
 sible Advantages to recommend it to
 our esteem and regard; but which
 sinks immediately into nothing, if
 once it is submitted to an allegorical

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~~or otherwise figurative~~ Interpretation. Which, as a plain History, has such Credentials, as nothing but what is equally Divine can lay claim to, ~~makes~~ such Discoveries as the clearest unassisted Reason could never reach to, and to which we must necessarily be beholding, if we will endeavour to form clear Notions of the Nature of our Redemption; but as soon as we construe it *parabolically*, thence immediately commences its insignificancy; and that which, as a plain History, would be one of the most valuable Pieces of Sacred Antiquity, becomes, when *allegoriz'd*, or constru'd *parabolically*, less useful, because unintelligible, than the least valuable Conceits of Profane Mythologists.

The worst of treatment which Moses has of late, more than ever, met with upon this Head, gave occasion

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to my first Thoughts upon this Subject. Upon the perusal of some bold Writers on this part of *Moses*, I was amaz'd to see, that what had so long pass'd with the wiser part of Mankind for a sober History, should at this time of day be brought down by some Men to the despicable Character of *Romance* and unintelligible *Allegory*. This put me upon examining into the Reasons on which they ground this Transformation; and the Subject Matter of the following LETTERS is the result of this Disquisition; wherein the Reasons against the Historical Construction of *Moses's Fall of Adam* are brought to the Test; and, I think, 'tis fairly shewn, that the second and third of *Genesis* bid as fair as any the most simple Memorial in the World, to be what the sober part of Mankind have hitherto thought 'em, an intelligible plain ac-

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count of a Transaction of the earliest Date, one of the most notable Influence, and which was attended with the most extensive Consequences, and those of the greatest moment.

I publish these **LETTERS**, with a desire to convince others of what I am, upon a serious Enquiry into Matters, satisfy'd in my self; and that the rather, inasmuch as I am fully convinc'd that the Historical Construction of the *Mosaic* account of the *Fall of Adam* is not only to be desir'd for the noble Discoveries it makes, if so interpreted, as I have shewn in a *Remark* upon the 16th and some following Verses of the third of *Genesis*, but a Matter of very great importance upon a religious account; without which I have clearly shewn we are not only wanting in several very considerable

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ble Discoveries, but 'tis impossible to give an intelligible account of the Nature of our Redemption. This, I believe, every one must think a very bad Consequence of allegorizing Moses, who is in Covenant with Christ; and this is certainly a sufficient Reason for my taking some pains in reasserting his just claim to an Historical Dress, if it is so, to do what I am able in defence of Christianity, in opposition to those Gain-sayers, who, in attempting to render the Mosaic account of the Fall unintelligible, do the greatest prejudice to the Redemption in the world. But these Matters are enlarg'd upon in the first following LETTER. I only mention 'em here as the main Reason I proceed upon, and what I think sufficient to bear me out in appearing in public, and that something largely, in vindica-

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tion of the vulgar Exposition of Moses's account of the Fall of Adam.

What are the Designs of those who would *allegorize* Moses in the second and third of *Genesis*, I can't pretend to determin; neither do I think it to my purpose to examine. My Undertaking is here to vindicate *Moses*, without busying my self in quest of their Designs, who are, or act as if they were, his Enemies. Possibly they are various, and some may intend nothing ill in so doing, but may run 'em into an *Allegory* purely in order to evade what Absurdities they fancy he is attended with if constru'd *Historically*. Others care not to hear of *Original Sin*, and accordingly make a Fable of the History of the Manner how and Time when *Adam* contracted that Depravation which has since been propagated far and wide to all his Offspring.

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spring. Others are as averse to the whole *Christian Dispensation*, and therefore *allegorize* the *Fall* in order to make the *Redemption* from that *Fall* an unintelligible thing. Upon these several accounts may several Persons deny *Moses's* History of the *Fall* of *Adam* an Historical Construction. But do it upon the most innocent account they will, we see in so doing they are not a little prejudicial to the *Christian Religion*. How I have come off in opposing them, and in endeavouring to vindicate *Moses* as Historically construd, the Reader must judge after a comparison of their Exceptions offer'd with what is answer'd in order to their removal. To me it appears clearly not only *a priori*, but even notwithstanding all Exceptions to the contrary, from what, in the following Pages, is offer'd, that *Moses's* account of the *Fall* of *Adam* is a plain History,

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History, if there be any such thing as a plain History in the whole World.

I have no more to add by way of Preface: Thus much being sufficient to vindicate my communicating to the Public what I have thought in vindication of *Moses's* History of the *Fall of Adam*. If any one, after all I have said in the third LETTER upon *Original Sin*, say, That tho' God has concluded all under Sin, yet he has not had Mercy upon all, inasmuch as not the hundredth part of the World have enjoy'd the happiness of being admitted into the Gospel-Covenant. I answer, that all Mankind were included in that Covenant when it was made with *Adam*, and that those who liv'd according to the Light which God had given 'em, all along before the *Fulness of time*,
were

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were sav'd in and through the Merits of a Saviour to come, whose Blood was in the eye of God of saving Efficacy as much before as after it was shed, as soon as the Stipulation for the Redemption of Mankind was agreed upon: And ever since he came, those who never had Christianity preach'd to 'em, being without that Law, have yet the Law of Nature implanted in 'em, and therein are a Law to themselves; and by that Law kept, they stand, as it is made efficacious to the purchasing 'em a title to Heaven by the Merits and through the Mediation of the Redeemer of Mankind. Why our Saviour came no sooner, and whence it comes that after he appear'd in the Flesh large Countries have all along continu'd unadmitted, by Baptism, into his Gospel-Covenant; how Faith in Christ, which the Heathens want,

is

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is supply'd, and the preventing Grace of God, *without which none can do Works good and acceptable*; how, and upon what terms, it is furnish'd; and what have been the Reasons of God's admission or rejection of Countries to or from his more immediate Government in the *Patriarchal and Legal Dispensations*, or under the *Gospel of Christ*; are Matters known only to God: And perhaps, as well as the *grand Mystery of GOD MADE MAN*, part of the Subject Matter of the Contemplations of the highest Angels: What we, *who see through a Glass darkly*, shall never discover here: When we see *face to face*, doubtless they may employ our intensest Thoughts, and break out by degrees in Discoveries of God's great Love to Mankind, and infinite Wisdom in the Government of the Moral World, to our wonder, and surprise,

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prize, and amazement, and satisfaction for ever and ever hereafter.

Or if any after what I have offer'd in vindication of God's Goodness in creating the World notwithstanding his foreknowledge of Man's Fall, say, That, indeed, what I advance would hold were there but few who should be Damn'd; who should be made Instances of God's Vengeance upon Sinners, and be kept as everlasting Monuments of his hatred of Sin, in order to keep all those indefectible in their Obedience who shall merit Heaven: Whereas as *strait is the Gate, and narrow the Path that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it*; this seems to bear hard upon God's Goodness still, that he should continue Millions of Millions in everlasting Misery, in order to preserve a very few in a happy Condition.

I say,

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I say, if any should alledge this, I answer, That we know not but that many more may be say'd than otherwise; and that our Saviour's calling 'em a few, may be only an indication of his Divine Philanthropy, who would that none should perish, but that all should come to the enjoyment of everlasting Life; who therefore here calls them who shall be sav'd, a few, because there might have been a great many more, had not some given themselves over to the Works of Death and Destruction; whereas if a great many more are say'd than otherwise, this Difficulty is remov'd. Or if not, inasmuch as the Damnation of those who Fall is absolutely owing to themselves, they must thank only themselves if they are consign'd over to everlasting Perdition; and the End God proposes to serve in punishing 'em eternally vindicates his Good.

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Goodness in the case; which is, thereby to preserve the Blessed indefectibly Obedient: To which purpose, the more they that suffer for Sin, the more manifestly is God's hatred of Sin shewn, and the better provision is made for the preservation of the Blessed eternally in their Duty: As God is therefore willing to keep all those eternally who once arrive at Heaven, upon this account he spares not the Punishment to all eternity of the greatest number of Miscreants; but torments 'em all for ever, that his own may see to what a degree he abominates Sin, and be thereby preserv'd indefectibly in perfect Obedience, and the Fruition of God and Heaven.

Besides that, who knows but that the damn'd part of the Race of Mankind may serve farther Ends than

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the preserving the Blessed of our own Kind indefectibly happy & May they not be reserv'd along with the fallen Angels as Preservatives in indefectible Happiness of the whole glorify'd Part of the Rational Creation. Of those numberless Classes of Rational Beings which, for any thing we know, are posted every where in infinitely happy Circumstances in the whole visible and invisible Creation. If for the Objection vanishes of Millions being damn'd in order to preserve comparatively speaking, two or three Innocent; inasmuch as the reverse may be true; and, comparatively speaking, of Angels and Men, only two or three may be damn'd in order to preserve Millions of Millions indefectible in their Happiness. But here we can but conjecture, inasmuch as God Almighty has not thought fit to let us into these

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these Matters: Neither need we be beholding to these Conjectures, inasmuch as God's Goodness is, without recurring to them, sufficiently vindicated in the case before us. Not that I think these Conjectures without their Probability neither; certainly the Damn'd of Mankind will be the fittest Preservatives of all the happy Classes of Rational Beings in their *Indefeasibility* which can be pitch'd upon, inasmuch as we being the weakest of Rational Agents, and therefore the most likely to come short of our Duty, if we be damn'd for Sin, this must satisfy the whole Rational World in what a wonderful degree of abhorrence it is had in the eye of Heaven: Which will be the best motive to Obedience: And from hence it seems as if we may with probability conclude that the damn'd of Mankind shall with the fallen An-

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gels not only serve for motives to
Indefectibility in the happy Part of
our Class, but of all the Classes what-
ever of Rational Creatures in the
whole World.

But I shall here add no more;
only I desire this favour of every
one who shall give himself the trou-
ble to read my former Volume,
that in the Preface, and elsewhere,
if he meets with it, he understands
by the Word *Literal* no other than
Historical: For I don't think that
Moses, in the former part of *Genesis*, is
absolutely without his *Figures*; tho'
he uses 'em as sparingly as any; and
many more may be, and often are
thought, consistent with *Historical*
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E R R A majoris momenti sic corrigantur.
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p. 96. Marg. r. *Heb*. p. 130. l. 27. r. *actively*. p. 140. l. 28.
r. *no nigher*. p. 142. l. 25. after of insert *the*.

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LETTER



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LETTER

LETTER I

S I R /

Since you publish'd my Letters in defence of *The Vulgar Exposition of the Mosaic History of the Creation of the World*, it has been some part of my business to collect what Objections are made against 'em by such as have done 'em the honour of a perusal: I am certify'd from all hands, that the design of 'em in general is unexceptionably good; Even the *Deists* themselves say, 'Tis a shame that any who own Christianity should treat *Moses* with so much Indignity, as they do, who play upon, and trifle with, and laugh at him in his *First History*: And against the particular prosecution of that Design, I have met with no very momentous Exceptions. I hear from some learned Men, that I ought to have nam'd the Author of the *Archæologia*, as well as him who writ the *Discourse concerning the Nature, Style, and Extent of the Mosaic History of the Creation*. To which I shall only answer, That had I nam'd neither,

The Mosaic History of

LET. 1. I conceive it had been no way prejudicial to what I offer; 'twas much more Substance than Accident, what was said than who said it, that what I advanc'd was levell'd against. And since the Exceptions I was to obviate, tho' to be met with in several, need but be cited out of one, I therefore chose this way, as what I conceiv'd would be least liable to give personal offence: And the Man I cited all along was the rather Mr. *Whiston*, because he has writ last upon the Subject, and because the most momentous Exceptions made against *Moses* are collected together in his Discourse, and because his Piece was ventur'd abroad after Dr. *Burnet's* Conduct had been very severely resent'd. I may add, because loose Men pride themselves in him, as a Man of absolutely strict and unexceptionable Reasoning; and because (I speak not so much my own as the Sentiments of some very great Men) he out-strips all that have gone before him in a too contemptuous and ludicrous treatment of the sacred Penman. Other Gentlemen with that I had been more particular than I am in examining the designs of all those who are concern'd in attempting to lessen the just value the World has hitherto had for the *Mosaic* Creation: They

con-

conceive that these Men are clearly LET. I. cut off from Christianity by this Saying of our Saviour's, *If ye believe not his Writings, how shall ye believe my Words?* John v. 47. 'Tis impossible, say they, for these Men to regard or believe *Moses*, and use him as they do; whereas, if they do not believe him, they are, even in the judgment of Christ, no Christians. This they blame me for not insisting upon at large; for not attempting to shew from hence, that all those concern'd in prejudice of *Moses*, whatever they may pretend, are no better at the bottom than Wolves in Sheeps Cloathing; designing, notwithstanding their outward fair pretences, the ruin of what apparently they so greatly regard. But in this case, as well as in the former, I believe I may fairly vindicate my self. Possibly I don't think as severely as these learned Men, of those who have unhappily writ some things prejudicial to *Moses*; and if so, no body can blame me for not charging them with what I am not satisfy'd they are guilty of. Indeed the known Piety of the principal Parties concern'd, won't suffer me to entertain such harsh Conceptions: Whereas, supposing I did, I can't think the method I have taken in any measure obliges me to the unpleasant Work of falling upon and censuring

LET. I. furing particular Persons ; my design was
 ~~~~~ to vindicate *Moses* in the First of *Genesis*  
 as a fair and plain Historian, which I  
 think is fully done in answering what  
 has been urg'd against him upon this  
 score, without giving my self the trouble  
 to search out the designs of those who  
 furnish'd me with the Exceptions I took  
 notice of.

These are the only considerable Excep-  
 tions I have met with hitherto against  
 my Letters ; which, according to your  
 desire, I here send you with my Answers.  
 If you meet with any, I expect to hear of  
 'em from you ; and in return, if you re-  
 quire it, I will answer 'em as well as I can.  
 As to what you farther desire of me, That  
 I will attempt also to vindicate the Vulgar  
 Exposition of the *Mosaic History of the*  
*Fall of Adam*, in this I shall comply with  
 you ; tho' I am sensible it is look'd upon by  
 many as a matter of very considerable  
 Difficulty. Indeed the *Deists* play upon  
*Moses* more in it than any thing ; tho'  
 possibly with more Assurance than Rea-  
 son, as it is well known that most of what  
 they say carries in it more Front than  
 Argument. We know to whom they are  
 beholding for their most material Excep-  
 tions ; I shall therefore make it my prin-  
 cipal business to answer what has been  
 offer'd

*V. Burnet's*  
*Archeolog.*  
*Phil. lib. 2.*  
*c. 7. p. 277,*  
*ad pag. 297.*

offer'd in prejudice of the *Mosaic Account* LET. I. of the *Fall* by that unhappy Author, not following his light way, but representing and answering all Exceptions worthy of notice, seriously, and as the matter requires. Other Difficulties omitted by him, if any such I meet with, I will also endeavour to remove; in order to render *Moses* in this case also a *fair and plain Historian*. You can't put me upon any thing I more delight in than I do in removing what Aspersions have been cast by unwary Men upon the sacred Writings; and I am sensible of no Particulars therein which have been more injur'd than those you have been pleas'd to put me upon; neither are there many to injure, which is matter of worse consequence. This last I am every day the more sensible of both from my own and far greater Mens experience; which engages me to comply with the less hesitancy with your desires in the case before us. I shall descend to a particular *Vindication of the vulgar Exposition of the Fall of Adam*, after I have laid down Two general Arguments demonstrative of the Historical Exposition of this famous Narration: The One conclusive with all Men of Reason and unbiased Affections; the Other, I think,

*V. Gildon's*  
Letter to  
Mr. B. in  
*Blount's*  
Works, p.  
194. Sect. 2.

view is at noising O. and B. 3. wold no  
lancostti



LET. I. no way to be evaded by those who call themselves Christians.

I.

V. Essay on  
the Crea-  
tion, Let. 2.  
p. 24.

It must be confess'd then that we are really fallen from that State or Condition in which Mankind came at first out of nothing; this I have prov'd to you formerly; and there are more Arguments in favour of this great Truth than I have there made use of. Indeed this Doctrine has been embrac'd by some of the *Heathens*, as well as by the *Jews*, and *Christians*: The very earliest Philosophers maintain'd such Tenets as shew, that had they seen rightly into matters, they would have been forc'd to have asserted this Truth. The manifold Evils to be met with in the World, put the first *Heathen Enquirers* into their Original upon the Supposition of two universal Causes, or Gods; the one infinitely Good, the other infinitely Evil; the former the Author of all the Happiness, the latter the cause of all the Miseries which created Beings either enjoy, or suffer in the World. This Opinion *Plutarch* tells us was of very early date; *Τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀποφύκειν ἡ σοφία*; maintain'd by the wisest and most useful Men in their Generations of all Antiquity, and Matters of very considerable consequence were built upon it. Now tho' this Opinion is a very irrational

V. *Plutarch*  
*de Iside,*  
*Osiride.*



irrational one, (as were it not beside my **LETTER** present business, I could easily shew) yet it sufficiently intimates, that they could by no means believe an infinitely good God capable of creating the World in the Circumstances they found it in; and consequently had they seen the Extravagancy of holding an infinitely evil Principle, they would have been put upon advancing something analogous to what we understand by the *Fall* of *Adam*. The Notion of the *Stoics*, which the first of that Sect maintain'd, That all the Evils in the World were owing to the Perversity of the Materials out of which it was made; That they were, in the phrase of *Maximus Tyrius*, *ἐπὶ τῶν ἡλικίων ὁμοίων* *V. Max. Tyr. dip. 25.* No Works of Art, but pure and necessary Affections of Matter; (which Hypothesis put 'em upon supposing Matter Eternal, and at last almost Co-incides with the former Opinion of an Anti-God) This Notion, I say, is evident demonstration that they could not admit a good God to be the direct author of Evil; and consequently, had they fram'd right conceptions of Matter, they would never have admitted the World to have been made by God in its present Condition; but would have acknowledg'd the *Fall*

LET. I. of Man, which alone can account rationally for the origin of Evil.

And as in those earlier Times we may see that the more rational and inquisitive Heathens look'd upon it as impossible for an infinitely good God to be the direct cause of the origin of Evil; so their Successors some time before and after the coming of our blessed Saviour speak more to our purpose, and declare that we are fallen from the Condition we were in at our first Creation. The *State of Innocence* is what the Poets signify by the *Golden Age*; and this they embellish with all the Ornaments they can think of, and set it off with all the natural and moral Advantages which their most fruitful Inventions can furnish. This they tell us is now vanish'd; being succeeded by degrees by the present *Fallen State*, which they call the *Iron Age*, and which they represent under all the natural and moral Disadvantages which the World does really at present labour under. The degeneracy of the Soul of Man, many of the Philosophers are very Eloquent in bewailing. Indeed some of 'em have a far deeper sense of it than many who call themselves Christians, especially the *Platonists* and *Stoics*, as may be seen over and over again in their



their admirable Writings. But here I *LET* need not enlarge, any one who has read the later Philosophers of each Sect, as *Porphry, Hierocles, or Seneca*, can't be wanting in multitudes of Instances in confirmation of this Truth. They tell us that the Soul of Man is quite another thing than it was in its primitive Condition, that his Reason is now almost totally enslav'd to his Passions, and that the Brute has well-nigh quite got the ascendant over the Man: According to them, the Condition of all Men is the same with what the Scripture ascribes to wicked *Cain*; *We are gone from the presence of the Lord*; in the Language of the Philosophers, *We are fallen from our originary state of Truth and Goodness, and we are utterly sunk into Sense*; our Soul has lost the wing, and is utterly unable to disengage itself from the *γῆινος σώμα*, the earthly part of us; that is, in the Language in which the holy Pen-man speaks of *Cain*, *We are now a Fugitive in the Earth*; and that this Degeneracy of the Soul of Man is owing to nothing else but his Apostacy and voluntary Fall from God, is declar'd fully by the same great Men: Of this we have a large and noble Account in *Simplicius on Epictetus*; and in *Hierocles's excellent Commentary on Pythagoras's Golden Verses*.

I sup;

LET. I. I suppose therefore it will be granted  
 by those who have any value for Reason, or who regard Testimony either humane or divine, that the whole Race of Mankind is fallen from that Happiness in which God Almighty at the first created us; and if we are fallen, consequently the Foundation of the *Mosaic Account* of the Fall is an Historical Truth: And if the Foundation of this Discourse is matter of Fact, we have all the reason in the world to believe that the whole Discourse is a plain and simple Account of this Matter of Fact: It has all the Characters of literal Simplicity which can possibly be met with in any History; nay I think there are no Books in the whole World so apparently unaffected as this and the other parts of *Moses's Writings*. If we therefore disallow this Piece a plain Historical Construction, why do we not the same by all the other Histories in the World? The plainest of 'em all bid not so fair for it: The foundation of most of 'em we can't *a priori* demonstrate to be Matter of Fact, and of the rest there is scarce one whose Author comes in appearance nigh *Moses* as a simple undersigning Historian. If we therefore allegorize *Moses* and act consistently with ourselves, we must the rather do the same by all



all other Writers; which none have yet LET. I.  
gone about to do, and whenever any sets  
an example, all the World will look up-  
on him as possess'd with a far higher de-  
gree of Frenzy than has hitherto been  
known within the Walls of *Bedlam*. *Thu-*  
*cidides* and *Livy* we look upon as Authors  
to be interpreted in an Historical man-  
ner; and yet who ever said that the sub-  
ject Matter of their Books is capable of  
being *a priori* discover'd? Have we not  
therefore more reason to do so by *Moses*  
in the case before us? His Piece has an  
evidence in favour of its being a true Hi-  
story, which they want; nay it has more  
evidences than one, the Fundamentals  
being not only capable of being determin'd  
*a priori* to be Matter of Fact; but, be they  
as famous for it as they will, *Moses* certain-  
ly far out-goes 'em in that upon which  
all ought to be most valu'd, the Simpli-  
city of an Historian. 'Tis true, there  
are some things in his History which may  
at first sight to us seem strange; but then  
I shall shortly make it appear that upon  
due Consideration they are capable of be-  
ing reconcil'd to our Reason; besides  
that, tho' they could not be brought to  
the level with present Matter of Fact, we  
must consider that it is the most ancient  
History in the World; and who ever dis-  
carded

# The Mosaic History of

LET I. carded one far less ancient for having something in it of the *Wonderful* & For being in some Particulars out of, or not perfectly agreeable to the modern way. Nay there is one thing to be said for what may seem strange in it, which no other History in the World can lay claim to; it contains nothing but Matter of Fact which happen'd in another World, for so may well the paradisaical state, if compar'd with the World in its present Circumstances, be call'd. Now we did not think it warrantable to turn the first Histories of the *West-Indies* absolutely into Fables, which bringing along with them all reasonable Credentials in favour of their Veracity, had nevertheless some Matters related in 'em very strange to us in these parts of the World; much less ought we to do the same by a History of the Earth, or any thing transacted in it in its paradisaical state; it was then a thing perfectly different from what it is now, doubtless much more so than the *West-Indies* are from these parts of the World: We ought not therefore, upon account of some strange Particulars, to discard what is deliver'd to us as a History of it, or any thing transacted in it.

Thus



Thus I think with all reasonable Men LET. I.  
the *Historical Construction* of the *Mosaic*  
Account of the *Fall of Adam* is demon-  
stratively vindicated. To those who call  
themselves *Christians* give me leave to  
offer another considerable Argument;  
what I have hinted at heretofore, and  
shall now endeavour to propose in its  
full strength and cogency. Every one  
who is a *Christian* believes the *Redemp-*  
tion of the World by *Jesus Christ*, as God  
has reveal'd it to us in the inspir'd Books  
of the *New Testament*. Now the *Re-*  
demption supposes a *Fall*, without the  
latter there being no necessity or possibi-  
lity of the former. As we are therefore  
certify'd of a *Redemption* in the *New Te-*  
stament, thence we must conclude that  
there has been a *Fall*. What that *Fall*  
was, indeed, the *New Testament* does  
not express, by particularising in an *Hi-*  
storical way, and at large upon the man-  
ner of it; but it speaks of it as known  
before, as may be seen in the places  
where it is mention'd; referring us for  
satisfaction in this point to the Account  
given by *Moses*: But I fear (says *S. Paul*) V. 2 Cor.  
lest by any means as the *Serpent* beguiled ii. 3.  
*Eve* through his subtilty, so your minds  
should be corrupted from the simplicity that  
is in *Christ*. This I believe every one  
must

LET. I. must acknowledge a plain reference to the History in particular of *Eve* and the *Serpent* in the former part of the third of *Genesis*: Wherefore (says the same Apostle) as by one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin, and so Death passed upon all, for that all have sinned; to which purpose there is more in the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th Verses. This is also a general reference to the *Mosaic Account* of the *Fall of Adam*; and so are all the other places where any thing of the *Fall* is mention'd either general or particular references to the third of *Genesis*. Now this referring in the New Testament to the Account of the *Fall* given by *Moses* in the Old, in my opinion necessitates an Historical Construction of the *Mosaic Narration*: For I suppose 'tis impossible to understand the nature of the *Redemption*, without knowing that of the *Fall* too; and yet all Christians must grant that the New Testament, which is the Record of the *Redemption*, was writ by Men of God in order to be understood. As this therefore must be admitted, and as the import of the *Redemption*, without a full knowledge of the *Fall*, can't be understood; consequently of necessity it is suppos'd in the New, that *Moses* has given an intelligible

V. Rom.  
v. 12.



ligible Account of the *Fall* in the Old Testament: And if this is supposed by Men inspir'd, 'tis certainly true; and the point is gain'd which I am endeavouring to prove, That *Moses's* Account of the *Fall of Adam* is an Historical Narrative.

I know no way else whereby a plain and intelligible Account can be given of Matter of Fact: Certainly not in *Parables*; they are confess'd by him who used 'em most, to be obscure; I mean by our Blessed Saviour; and accordingly, after he had deliver'd 'em, he generally subjoin'd a plain interpretation of 'em. Supposing therefore the *Mosaic* Account of the *Fall* to be writ in a *Parabolical* Stile, I think we have no interpretation of it; from whence it follows, at least, that we can't be positive that we understand it; and if so, this cuts off our understanding the nature of our Redemption; neither can we tell what Christianity is, or what it is to be Christians. This Consequence seems to me unavoidable upon making a *Parable* of what is vulgarly call'd *the History of the Fall of Adam*: And if we make the Incidents in this Narrative *Hieroglyphical*, the Consequence is the same. 'Tis true this was an *Egyptian* Science, and therefore some are pleas'd

LET. I. pleas'd to fancy that *Moses*, as he was vers'd in all the Learning of the *Egyptians*, might make use of it; but the Consequence now nam'd will suffer none to admit of this who call themselves Christians; for certainly this *Symbolical* way of conveying down the knowledge of things to Posterity is the most precarious of any; not only in Matter of Fact, but even in those things in which possibly it is capable of arriving at the greatest Certainty, general Rules of Morality: Its uncertainty what can better shew than this famous *Hieroglyphic* which the *Egyptians* used to engrave on the Golden Images of their Gods; two Dogs, an Hawk, and an Ibis: By the Dogs some understood the two Hemispheres, others the two Tropics; by the Hawk some understood the Sun, others the Equinoctial; by the Ibis some the Moon, others the Zodiac; as is evident from *Clement Alexandrinus's* account of it. Besides that this method of conveying down Matters to Posterity is not more uncertain and precarious than it is elaborately foolish, as the most Learned Bishop *Stillingfleet* takes notice in the case of the famous *Hieroglyphic* of *Diospolis*; where was a Child to express coming into the World, an old Man for going out of it,

V. Acts  
vii. 22.

V. *Stillingfleet's Orig. Sacra*, p. 13. Ed. 7.

Id. p. 86.



an Hawk for God, an Hippotamus for **LET. 1.**  
 Hatred, and a Crocodile for Impudence;  
 and all to express this venerable Apo-  
 thegm, *O ye that come into the World, and  
 that go out of it, God hates Impudence:*  
*And therefore, proceeds he, certainly this  
 kind of Learning deserves the highest form  
 among the Difficiles Nugæ; and all these  
 Hieroglyphics put together will make but  
 one good one, and should be labour lost.*  
 Thus have I provid to you, I think, by  
 two very considerable Arguments, that  
 the *Mosaic Account of the Fall* is *Histo-*  
*rically* to be construd; and not to be  
 turn'd, as some extravagantly contend,  
 into I know not what unintelligible *Pa-*  
*rales* or *Hieroglyphics*. This is what I  
 promis'd in general. I know of no material Exceptions  
 which can be made against either of  
 these Arguments; the former is as ratio-  
 nally conclusive as any in matters of its  
 nature can be expected, and therefore it  
 challenges no less than the force of a de-  
 monstration in its kind: And that the  
 referring in the New to the account of  
 the *Fall* given by *Moses* in the *Old Te-*  
*stament*, supposes that Account to be *Hi-*  
*storically* written, is necessary, if the  
 knowledge of the nature of the *Fall* be  
 requisite in order to the understanding  
 that

LET. I. that of the Redemption, or Second Covenant. Some indeed say that it is enough, in order to understand the Redemption, that we know that there has been a *Fall*, which the New Testament teaches from *Moses*; who therefore may, without any damage to the Second Covenant, as to the particular Account of the *Fall*, be *parabolically* constr'd: Whereas this Notion is only receiv'd as a Subterfuge by such as fancy the *Mosaic* Account of the *Fall* incapable of being Historically constr'd; who, no doubt, will gladly reject it when I make the contrary to the Notion they have conceiv'd appear, and shew that the Second and Third of *Genesis* are really part of a rational History. Besides that, I can't conceive it by far sufficient, in order to understand the nature of the Second Covenant, that we know only in general from *Moses* that there has been a *Fall*; For let the Moral of *Moses's* Parable be that we are fallen, and let all that we know of the *Fall* be deduc'd from *Moses*; consequently what is mention'd out of *Moses* in the New Testament, besides what relates to the *Fall* in general, must be constr'd as it is in *Moses*, that is, *parabolically*; I mean every particular passage thence transcrib'd into the New Testament must be understood



stood as it is in *Moses*; and because we LET. 1.  
 are suppos'd to learn nothing from *Mo-*  
*ses's* Parable but in general that we have  
 fallen, consequently we can learn no  
 more from what is transcrib'd thence or  
 referr'd to as there in the New Testa-  
 ment. The Question then is, What are  
 we fallen from or to, after what manner  
 fell we, and what is the either natural  
 or instituted Consequence of our falling?  
 These matters, it seems, *Moses* is *parabo-*  
*lical* in, and what we have of these mat-  
 ters in the New Testament is taken out of  
 him; and these matters we are suppos'd  
 by these Men not concern'd to know.  
 We know not therefore either from *Mo-*  
*ses* or otherwise what we are redeem'd  
 from, or to, &c. that is, we are ignorant  
 of the nature of our *Redemption*; which,  
 as to suppose, is absurd, consequently so  
 is it to imagin it sufficient in order to un-  
 derstand the nature of our *Redemption*,  
 that we know only in general, as the  
 Moral of *Moses's* Parable, that there has  
 been a *Fall*.

I have no more to add by way of a  
 general Vindication of the vulgar Exposi-  
 tion of the *Mosaic* History of the *Fall* of  
*Adam*; I descend now therefore accord-  
 ing to my promise to a particular Vindi-  
 cation of it; to endeavour to remove all

# The Mosaic History of

LET. I. those Difficulties which are thought by some to attend its Historical Construction. I take it for granted, with the sober part of Mankind, that if no sufficient reason can be given to the contrary, the Second and Third Chapters of *Genesis* ought to be constru'd Historically, and what reasons are given by some to the contrary, I shall now proceed to make it my business to invalidate, and to shew that they are not by far sufficient whereupon to found a *parabolical* or otherwise unintelligible Construction of the *Mosaic* account of the *Fall of Adam*. But First I will give you in a few Words the substance of the account of the *Fall* deliver'd by *Moses*, and take notice of the Particulars in this Account excepted against; that I may proceed as methodically as possible, and remove the Difficulties attending these Particulars not confusedly, but accordingly as the Particulars excepted against fall in, in the Series of what I venture to call the *Mosaic History*.

Gen. the  
2d and 3d  
Chapters.

I think I do no prejudice to the *Mosaic* account of the *Fall of Adam*, if I represent the substance of it thus: After God had made Man in his own Image, having breath'd into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, so that he became a living Soul; and after he had given him dominion over



over all the Works of his Hands, and LET. I. had put all things of an inferior nature in subjection under his Feet, and after he had form'd an Help-meet for Man out of the Flesh and Bone of *Adam*; after he had plac'd this happy Pair in a Garden of Pleasure fit for their Reception, furnish'd with all things sufficient not only for necessary Refreshment but for Delight which infinite Wisdom could contrive, and which an infinitely bountiful Hand could add: After all these things were done, and this Garden was committed to this innocent Couple to cultivate and dwell in, God Almighty thought fit to try what sense they had of his late great Goodness, by enjoining 'em Obedience to a positive Command as a Test whether or no what he had done for 'em so affected 'em as to prevail with 'em to obey him. This positive Command was, That they should not eat of the Fruit of one Tree in the midst of the Garden, call'd, *The Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil*; of all the rest they might freely take, only this was exempted: And the encouragement to the keeping of this Command, besides the foregoing Reason, was this, That if they did not break it, they should continue to live in an uninterrupted state of Happiness: And the penalty

C 3

inflicted

LET. I. inflicted upon the breach of this Law was this, That in the Day that they broke it, by eating of this Fruit, they should surely die; or that from that time forward their Nature should be chang'd, and they should be liable to Death. This Law, thus enforc'd, God delivers to *Adam*, which he communicated to *Eve*; and *Eve* brake it, being tempted to the breach of it by a *Serpent*; and overcome by the hopes of coming off without Punishment, as the *Serpent* pretended, and of an encrease of Knowledge, such as would almost equal that of God; *Eve* deluded *Adam*: And immediately after their Disobedience they saw their Folly and Sin, were asham'd of the Nakedness which before they did not blush at, and accordingly cover'd it with Fig-leaves: The sense of their Guilt and Shame made them hide themselves when God came in the Evening into the Garden; who thence took occasion to let them know his Displeasure at their Disobedience, by telling 'em, after a full and fair Conviction, that the Punishment he had before forewarn'd 'em of should assuredly take effect; indeed not immediately, but after an uneasy Life for some time upon the Earth, which he curs'd for their sakes to Barrenness, and the bringing forth of noxious Weeds, in order



order to make *Adam* come by his Bread LET. I. at no cheaper a rate than the Sweat of his Brow; upon *Eve* he inflicted Pain in Travail, and told her, that now she should be forc'd on all occasions to have recourse to her Husband, who should be Lord over her, tho' at first she was design'd for what spoke something of an Equality, a Meet-help: The *Serpent* also was punish'd both in his Food, and Form; being condemn'd to lick the Dust, and to crawl on his Belly; and between his Seed and that of the Woman God establish'd a lasting Enmity. After these Denunciations God, in lieu of the Branches which they had wreath'd about 'em to cover their Nakedness, gave 'em Coats of Skins; and, after *sarcastically* reprimanding 'em for their Folly in giving ear to the *Serpent* when he told 'em that they should be as Gods, order'd 'em to be driven out of Paradise; and plac'd *Cherubims* and a *Flaming Sword* at the entrance of it, to keep them from returning and taking of the Fruit of another Tree which grew also in the middle of the Garden, which they had now forfeited their former right to, call'd, *The Tree of Life*.

And against this account of the *Fall* in its obvious Construction there are several which are look'd upon as very considerable

V. Bishop  
Kidder on  
Gen. iii. 16.

LET. I. *rable Exceptions: The Heads it consists of, and which are all charg'd with their respective Difficulties, are these: First, The Place, and Furniture of that Place where the Scene of the Fall is laid; the description of Paradise and of the four Rivers, and the two Trees; these Particulars some look upon as charg'd with such Difficulties as render this part of Moses utterly incapable of any other than a Chimerical or Romantic Construction; and accordingly, upon account of them in the first place, many recede from this History in its vulgar Exposition. Secondly, The Law given to Adam for tryal of his Obedience, and the Penalty by which that Law was enforc'd; the prohibition of the Fruit of a certain Tree in the Garden, and the severe Punishment consequent to disobedience of that Command; Against this Head also several Objections are made, such as those who make 'em are pleas'd to fancy incapable of a Solution. The Third Head excepted against is, The account of the Instrument which the Devil made use of in his first Assault, and the immediate strange Consequences which attended the Disobedience of our first Parents: The Discourse twixt Eve and the Snake, and the finding their selves Naked after they had complied with the Allurements*



ments of this crafty Beast: This also LET. I.  
 some are pleas'd to make merry with, as IV.  
 an Extravagance exceeding any to be met  
 with in the boldest Pieces. The next Head  
 quarrell'd with is, *That part of this Ac-*  
*count wherein the Punishments inflicted up-*  
*on the Offenders are recorded*; the Punish-  
 ment of *Adam* and *Eve*, the Curse of the  
 Serpent and the Ground; to take all these  
 literally is look'd upon by some as a great  
 absurdity: And the last is, *The cloathing* V.  
*of the first Man and Woman*; and their ex-  
 pulsion out of the Garden, and the placing  
 a Guard of Angels in the entrance into that  
 happy place, to keep 'em from attempting  
 upon the Tree of Life after they had forfeited  
 it, and were expelled out of Paradise. With  
 some Particulars under this Head fault is  
 also found; and all put together Histori-  
 cally constru'd, is look'd upon by some as  
 no better than a bundle of ridiculous Extra-  
 vagance. And as against all these Bran-  
 ches as they appear *Prima Fronte* divers  
 Exceptions are made; so some of 'em  
 are charg'd not only as far as their obvi-  
 ous interpretation will bear, but even  
 much farther, according to the constru-  
 ction put upon 'em by those who best  
 knew their extent and meaning, the Wri-  
 ters of the New Testament; as in the  
 case of the influence which *Adam's* first  
 Sin

LET. I. Sin was to have upon all his Posterity, which we can't say is obviously express'd upon this occasion, but yet it is a thing so clearly declar'd, and so frequently suppos'd in the Gospel-Covenant, that we can't but acknowledge it to be included in, and consequently chargeable upon the *Mosaic* Expression. Thus have you the Heads excepted against in *Moses*, and the two ways by which, at least, some of 'em are excepted against.

I shall not now stand to enumerate all the Difficulties with which every particular branch of this History will upon Examination be found to be teeming; they must all be taken notice of in their proper places hereafter, and therefore it will but be to do what must be done again to give you a Catalogue of 'em here: Neither shall I trouble you with an Account of, and Answer to any of 'em in this, having already exceeded the usual limits of a Letter: Hereafter I shall Answer what Difficulties ha' been charg'd upon every branch in their order, and those First such as are obviously deducible from the Letter of *Moses*; and afterwards, if such there are, those which are fix'd upon it, or any part of it, upon account of the more extensive Construction given by the Writers of the New Testament. I am  
sensible



sensible that to do these things accurately LET. 1. will require no little of Time and Thought; some Difficulties I shall meet with, and be obliged to answer, which are the main Exceptions of the *Deists* against the Christian Religion; and the rest will not take a little answering and clearing up, e'er in the Eyes of some Men, I shall be able to make *Moses*, in the account of *Adam's Fall*, capable of being look'd upon, and interpreted as an Historian. However, these things don't terrify me; on the contrary, I know of no greater pleasure than in searching after such things as the more inable me to give a reason of the Faith that is in me: And what farther most forcibly engages me upon this Undertaking, is a settled conviction of the intimate connection there is 'twixt *Moses's Fall of Man* and the *Gospel-Dispensation* deliver'd by Men of God in the New Testament: I am satisfy'd that if the former of these is a *Parable*, the latter is *unintelligible*; if the former is an *Hieroglyphic* with relation to the genuin import of the latter, we are *absolutely in the dark*: I am satisfy'd that we can't pretend to understand the latter without interpreting the former in an Historical manner; which consequently must of necessity be done by every one who challenges the Name of Christian. I take it

LET. I. it therefore to be an Undertaking not only pleasant but laudable to attempt to shew that it warrantably may be done; to remove this Exception against Christianity, by shewing in particular, in answer to all Objections, *That we have no reason to recede from the Historical Construction of the Mosaic History of the Fall of Adam.*

But I shall add no more now, being unwilling to be guilty of troubling you with a Letter of an unreasonable length: Accept of thus much at this time; hereafter I will endeavour more particularly to gratify you to the utmost of my power. I am,

S I R,

*Yours, &c.*

LETTER



LETTER II.

SIR,

HAVING distinguish'd in my last the several Heads in the *Mosaic Account of the Fall of Adam*; against which, as Historically constrn'd, divers Exceptions are made; and having promis'd a separate Answer to what is objected against every Particular, in order to re-establish *Moses's* right in this case to a plain Interpretation; I come now to perform part of my promise, and to answer what Exceptions are made against the First Head. I have already specify'd, *the Place and Furniture of that Place where the Scene of the Fall is laid*; against the Account of that happy *Paradise Adam and Eve* first inhabited in their State of Innocence, and of the two notable Trees which grew in the middle of that Garden, and which *Moses* takes more than ordinary notice of, Now *Moses's* account of that Garden of Pleasure is this; *And the Lord God planted a Garden Eastward in Eden, and there he put the Man whom he had form'd; and out of the Ground made the Lord God to grow every Tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the Tree of Life also in*

I.  
v. Gen. ii.  
Ver. 8, 9,  
10, 11, 12,  
13, 14.

the

LET. 2. *the midst of the Garden, and the Tree of knowledge of good and evil : And a River went out of Eden to water the Garden, and from thence it was parted and became into four Heads ; the name of the first is Pison, that is it which compasseth the whole Land of Havilah where there is Gold ; and the Gold of that Land is good ; there is Bdelium, and the Onyx-stone : And the name of the second River is Gihon, the same is it that compasseth the whole Land of Ethiopia : And the name of the third River is Hiddekel, that is it which goeth towards the East of Assyria : And the fourth River is Euphrates.* In which Account we have the situation of Eden Geographically delineated ; and the product of the Garden, which our first Parents were plac'd in and order'd to cultivate, taken notice of ; especially the two noted Trees which stood in the middle of this Garden Moses gives us the Names of : Both which Particulars, *the situation of the place, and the two Trees,* some Men fancy to labour under very considerable Difficulties ; which must be clear'd, e'er Moses can in this case be Literally or Historically construd.

As to the situation of Paradise, they think 'tis impossible for Moses's Geography to give any account of it ; otherwise People would never ha' thought so extravagantly



travagantly of it as many have done: LET. 2.  
Extravagantly indeed (say they) when,   
notwithstanding all this Geography,  
several considerable Men have thought  
themselves oblig'd to *allegorize* the whole  
Story, and to fancy that under the four  
Rivers and the two Trees mention'd by  
*Moses*, several mystical Matters are con-  
vey'd to us. By the *four Rivers* some  
have conceiv'd that *Moses* understood the  
four *Cardinal Virtues*; others, who seem  
to have had a greater fancy for high Fee-  
ding than good Living, made *Oil*, *Wine*,  
*Milk*, and *Honey*, the bottom of the My-  
stery: Some plac'd *Paradise* in the third  
Heaven, Others in the Mind of Man:  
And of those who were not altogether  
thus extravagant, several have conceited  
that it was situated within the Orb of  
the Moon; others believ'd it in the Moon  
itself: Others came a little lower, and  
plac'd it in a Mount nigh the Orb of the  
Moon: Others lower still, making choice  
of the middle Region of the Air for its  
situation: Others did not know where to  
place it at all; and others, rather than  
not find a place for it, have assign'd it  
its portion under the Earth, where most  
fancy Hell. Of those who have plac'd it  
upon our Earth, some have fix'd it in a  
Southern part of the World beyond the  
Ocean;

*V. Raleigh's*  
*Hist. of the*  
*World,*  
*l. 1. cap. 3.*  
*§. 2.*

*V. Huettius*  
*on the si-*  
*tuation of*  
*Paradise,*  
*pag. 4.*

LET. 2. Ocean ; making the Flaming Sword which was to guard it from *Adam*, the *Equatorial* Regions of the Earth, compris'd under the Division attributed to the *Torrid*

V. Burnet's  
Theory,  
lib. 2. c. 6.

V. Willet  
on Gen.  
ii. 10.

V. Raleigh's  
Hist. lib. 1.  
cap. 3. 3. 9.  
etc.

V. Huet.  
lib. præd.  
pag. 5.

*Zone* : Others have suppos'd all the Earth equally *Paradisaical* : Some have fancy'd that *Paradise* was situate under the *Line* ; and some, to be as opposite to this Notion as is possible, have honour'd with it the *North Pole* : Others have imagin'd it in the extremity of the *South*, or about the *South Pole* : Some fancy it to have been in the *East-Indies*, others in the *West* : Some in *Europe*, others in *Asia*, others in *Afric*. Indeed more are for *Asia* than either of the other ; but those who agree upon it differ extravagantly in the particular places where they choose to fix it ; For some of these will have it to be upon the *Ganges*, others upon the *Acesines* in the *East-Indies* ; some fix it in *Armenia* the Greater, others in *Mesopotamia* : Some in *Persia*, others in *Arabia* : Some at *Jerusalem*, and some in *Celestria* : And lastly, it is thought with great reason by some, to be fix'd nigh *Babylon* : And others bring it down lower even to *Aracca*, which is wash'd by the joint Streams of the *Tygris* and *Euphrates*, some time before they separate again, and fall at a considerable distance from each other into



into the *Persian Gulf*. And as there is LET. 2.  
 thus much difference among learned Men  
 with relation to the determination of the  
 situation of *Paradise*, so those who fix it  
 upon our Earth disagree very little less  
 about the fixing the four Rivers which  
 are said to belong to it, as might be  
 shewn also at large, were not what is said  
 already thought sufficient to prove that  
*Moses's* account of the situation of *Para-*  
*dise* is far from determining satisfactorily  
 where it was. And if we know not where  
*Paradise* was, consequently whatever is  
 said to have been transacted in it was  
 done we know not where; possibly in a  
 Country of the same nature with *Utopia*,  
 which as it has no Being but in fancy,  
 whatever is said to be transacted in it is  
 no better than *Chimæra*: *Times and Pla-*  
*ces* (as the Learned Sir *Walter Raleigh* ex-  
 cellently observes) are approv'd Witnesses  
 of worldly Actions; now if the Birth and  
 Works and Death of our Saviour had been  
 said to have been done in some such Coun-  
 try as no Man ever heard tell of, and his  
 Miracles had been perform'd in the Air, or  
 no place certainly known, the Christian Re-  
 ligion would have took but slender root in  
 the Minds of Men; the very same 'tis  
 thought may be said not suppositiously  
 but really upon the Fall of Adam, the

Lib. 1. c. 3.  
 S. 4.

LET. 2. Scene of it is laid we know not where, and consequently this is a strong Motive with some (as themselves fancy) very considering Men, to discard the Scene and the Transaction both together. This is what is objected against the former part of the first of the Heads into which I have distinguish'd the *Mosaic* account of the Fall of *Adam*. From the prodigious number of diversities of Conceits about it, some would infer that there never was such a Place in Nature, removing the Place in order that the Thing said to be done there may fall of course.

Before I proceed to answer this Objection, give me leave to take notice of the ill consequence of Mens advancing every extravagant Fancy they light upon in the Interpretation of holy Scripture: This is, in my opinion, the direct way to bring into contempt what they pretend to interpret. In the case before us several Men have been extremely fancyful and free in advancing idle and fantastical Notions: They have imagin'd *Paradise* every where, which has made some deny it a Being any where: And in other cases where Men have been equally failing, the consequence has been the same. Were this method therefore without controul or opposition to take effect, I don't know



know but that as some Parts have suffer'd LET. 2.  
 already, all the other Branches of the  
 holy Books would in time have the same  
 usage; which is a direct way to ruin 'em;  
 a more certain its worst Enemies could not  
 devise in prejudice of holy Writ. This  
 I the rather take notice of here, because  
 I am sensible that this method of fixing  
 wild senses upon Scripture prevails with  
 some Men now as much as ever; rather  
 than lose a vain Conceit, they will sacri-  
 fice the most solemn and sacred Author  
 both as to his Sense and Credit; which  
 as it is a high Indignity done to him they  
 play upon, so 'tis certainly the greatest  
 gratification in the world to those who  
 wish well to *Deism*. What more vilifies  
 a thing than that it is look'd upon as  
 next to an impossibility to come by its  
 true meaning? Whereas, what renders  
 the sense of a thing more dubious than  
 its being surrounded with a thousand  
 different glosses which all pretend to  
 the truth, even the most fanciful having  
 so much said in favour of 'em as seem-  
 ingly to justify their pretensions? This  
 method therefore of treating holy Scrip-  
 ture, tends directly to its destruction: It  
 first aims at making it unintelligible;  
 and when once 'tis made such, 'tis  
 thought wise Men act consistently with

LET. 2. themselves if they look upon it as not worth their notice.

In answer to the Exception alledg'd, you must not expect that I will set myself formally to confute all the extravagant Notions which I have collected: Indeed most of 'em ought rather to be laugh'd at, were it not, as silly as they are, for the prejudice they do to holy Scripture: Neither, in my opinion, as the Objection is laid, are any such particular Answers requir'd. Men would infer from the diversities of Sentiments which have pass'd upon it, that there never was such a Place as *Paradise*; and if there never was such a Place, then the account of what is suppos'd to have been transacted in it is a fabulous and romantic Piece. This is the stress of the Objection: And I conceive it may be fully answer'd in a few Words. I grant that if there never was such a place as *Paradise*, then the *Mosaic History of the Fall of Adam* is fabulous; For a matter of Fact to be done no where is absolutely inconsistent with, or contradictory to its Nature: If we therefore allow that there never was such a place as *Paradise*, it follows of course that the *Mosaic History of the Fall* is false; but then that diversities of opinions about a thing infer its non-existence, is what



what I utterly deny: Indeed this has no LET. 2. shadow of Consequence: 'Tis a Principle which once built upon would be productive of far greater Extravagancies than have yet appear'd in the World. There are several very different Opinions about the Solution of the Sensation of Vision; ought this to prevail with us to disbelieve such a thing, and persuade us out of our Eyes? Several Men can't agree about the reason of that most useful *Phenomenon* of the flux and reflux of the Sea; Has any been so mad as thence to conclude that the *Phenomenon* is not matter of Fact? None ever yet was known to make such a conclusion; and if any hereafter incline to such a thing, if he will trust any of his Senses separately, or the united Testimony of 'em all, let him be plac'd at the Low-water-mark till the Tide returns about him, and his Frenzy will immediately vanish and sink into nothing: But above all things, there are wonderful diversities of Opinions about several ancient matters of Fact; as the manner and time of the World's coming into Being; which yet to discard because some Men have thought differently upon these matters, and therefore to deny that the World was created ever, or at all, is the greatest of Absurdities; 'tis to de-

LET. 2. ny that to be matter of Fact which is capable of no less than both Physical and Metaphysical demonstration : Indeed it is so far from being warrantable proceeding from different opinions about a thing to discard it of its Being, that the reverse of this practice is, generally speaking, absolutely consonant to Reason. It is but very seldom that we meet with abundance of diversities of Thoughts spent upon what is really nothing ; and therefore they are so far from arguing the non-existence of a thing, as to infer with all the reason in the world the quite contrary : As there are therefore abundance of diversities of opinions about the situation of *Paradise*, this is far from inferring that such a Place was not once matter of Fact : Such Conclusions as these are attended with the worst and most extravagant of Consequences ; rather, inasmuch as it is seldom or never known that Men make so much Dispute and Controversie about nothing, we have the strongest reason in the world to conclude that there really was such a Place.

But then it may be urg'd farther, from the latter part of the Objection propos'd, that Times and Places are approv'd witnesses of worldly Actions ; and nothing gains



gains greater credit to a past matter of Fact, than the being able to shew at what Time and where the thing was done. Indeed a thing which is not thus circumstantiated, seems scarce worthy the solid Title of matter of Fact; but as the *Ideas* of Time and Place are vague and fleeting, so is that of the Fact too, it being impossible to fix it till we have an *Ubi* and *Quando* to say that Then and There it was done. *In the Days of Old, and in the Land of Faries*, are fit introductions to whimsical chimerical Stories; whereas when any History is so introduc'd, it raises in us an *Idea* of something romantic; which being taken up in the entrance, is scarce laid down in the perusal of all that follows; Possibly Time and Place being not specify'd, we can't necessarily conclude that what is related is not matter of Fact; tho' *Chronology* and *Geography* are the two *Eyes* of *History*, yet it seems capable of being granted that, as long as they are not the whole Head, they are but *partes minus principales*, and consequently such as, if they be remov'd, *totum non necessario interit*; But then it must be confess'd also, that to say a thing was done none knows When nor Where, is a shrewd Temptation to cautious Men not to believe that it was done any

LET 2. where. This seems to be the case of what is call'd the *Mosaic History of the Fall of Adam*; which therefore must be admitted hence, tho' not to be utterly destroy'd, to be very much prejudic'd. This is a considerable Exception in the Eyes of some Men, who think that therein they follow the faithful Dictates of Reason, very much lessening the Credit of the *Mosaic History* even in their opinions: With others it is strong enough to demonstrate the whole a Romance; they are willing it should be so, which makes temerity so much force in this Objection as whereon to build the Conclusion they aim at. This Difficulty, I believe, is capable of being remov'd as well as the former; For the time of the *Fall* is sufficiently specify'd, it being at most but a few Days after the Creation of the World; and the place seems to be so too, notwithstanding the vast variety of Sentiments which have been entertain'd about it. I think it is demonstrable, in opposition to the strange Conceits of the Allegorical, and some other Gentlemen, that *Paradise* was a place situate somewhere upon the face of our Earth: And the Lord God planted a Garden; It is not rational to suppose this was done under

the



the Ground, or aloft in the Air: *And LET. 2.*  
*out of the Ground made the Lord God to*  
*grow, &c.* This fixes it, if any Expres-  
 sion in the World can, to the Surface of  
 our Earth. And as this Garden, accor-  
 ding to the *Mosaic* account of it, was  
 situate somewhere upon the Surface of  
 our Earth; so the same account seems to  
 point out the place where it stood, after  
 a Geographical manner: 'Tis said to  
 have been planted *Eastward*; that is,  
 with respect to the place where *Moses*  
 writ, in a determinate Country call'd *E-*  
*den*; and an account of the situation of  
 that Country is subjoin'd: It stood (says  
 our Author, in the eyes of the best Com-  
 mentators) upon a River; which con-  
 tinu'd One, during its watering the Land  
 and Garden of *Eden*, but afterwards di-  
 vided it self into four Channels: These  
 Channels, and the Countries they bor-  
 der upon or encompass, *Moses* takes par-  
 ticular notice of, giving us their Names,  
 and teaching us farther to find 'em out  
 by the adjacent Countries; and these  
 things are so accurately done, that some  
 late learned Men pronounce an *Eden* upon  
 the Land of *Eden*, tho' they are not ab-  
 solutely sure of the Plot in it where the  
 Garden was: They have found that the  
 Land of *Eden* was situate upon the great  
 River


 LET. 2. River which is the result of the joint Streams of the *Tygris* and *Euphrates*, 'twixt their uniting nigh *Babylon*, and their separating again into those two Streams by which they are discharg'd into the *Persian Gulf*. How far it extended on each side of the River, indeed, we can't tell, neither for the situation of *Paradise* is it material for us to know; For *Paradise* stood certainly upon the River, or at least border'd upon it, as is evident from *Moses's* saying that it was water'd by it. *And a River went out of Eden to water the Garden*; or, the Land of *Eden* was situate upon a River which also touch'd upon the Garden; and from thence it was parted and became into four Heads; which out of the Country ceas'd to be one Stream, being divided into four Branches: The name of the first is *Pison*, that is it which compasseth the whole Land of *Havilah*, where there is Gold, &c. that Branch which was nearest the place where *Moses* writ he names first, which was the Westerly of the two Branches by which the great River falls into the *Persian Gulf*, which borders upon the Country which was inhabited by *Havilah* the Son of *Cush*; that is, part of *Arabia* which *Havilah* was possess'd of all along this River side, and down a considerable way upon

Gen.

xxv. 18.

1 Sam. xv. 7.



upon the borders of the Gulf. And the name of the second is Gihon, the same is it that compasseth the whole Land of Ethiopia: The second River was call'd Gihon, being the other of the two Branches which carry the Tygris and Euphrates into the Sea; bordering upon the Country where Cush settled, which was more Easterly than the Land of Havilah: These two of the four Branches were at the South-end of the Country of Eden. And the name of the third River is Hiddekel, that is it which goeth towards the East of Assyria: The third River is Hiddekel, in Pliny Diglito where it ran slow, and Tygris where its Current was swiftest; This River runneth, according to the Septuagint, towards Assyria. And the fourth River is Euphrates; And these two Branches were at the North-end of the Country of Eden. Thus is the Country of Eden, in the eyes of several very learned Men, sufficiently discover'd.

'Tis true others, who grant that the Country of Eden was situate hereabouts, taking up a considerable space betwixt the Heads and the Mouths of the Tygris and Euphrates, (for by Hiddekel and Perath all Men allow these two Rivers to be meant) won't admit of the two Outlets into the Sea to be the Pisen and Gihon of Moses;

V. Bishop Patrick on Gen. ii. & Huetius on the situation of Paradise.

LET. 2. *Moses*; some making the River *Nabarsares* to be the *Gibon*, which is thought formerly to have discharg'd it self into the *Persian Gulf*, but is now absorb'd in the Lakes of *Chaldea*, which are not very far from *Ur* of the *Chaldees*, the *Habitation of the Father of the faithful*. These Men understand by *Pison* a Branch of the *Tygris* call'd (says *Q. Curtius*) by those who live nigh it, *Phasis*; which *Zenophon* calls *Phiscus*; others *Pasi-Tygris*, as compounded of *Phasis* and *Tygris*: And the same names are by other learned Men attributed to other Branches belonging to the two unquestion'd Rivers: And accordingly some place *Paradise* in *Armenia* the Greater, as our learned Mr. *Carver*, who fancies that the *Tygris* and *Euphrates* rise there from the same Fountain, and continue for a considerable time in the same Stream; upon which Stream he fixes *Paradise*, before it is divided into the two famous Rivers call'd *Tygris* and *Euphrates*: Others fix it in the Country of *Babylon*, as *Sir Walter Raleigh*; and others bring it lower still, as the learned *Huetius*; who says that the Earthly *Paradise* was situated in *Eden*, a part of the Province of *Babylonia*, or *Iraque*, which extended it self all along the common Channel of the two great Rivers,

near

V. Willet  
on Gen. ii.  
Q. 13. P. 24.

V. Huetius  
p. 25.



near the place where was the ancient LET. 21  
 Town of *Erec*, or *Aracca*, according to  
 the position of *Ptolomy*.

However, tho' learned Men differ about these two Rivers, yet the other all, who go rationally to work, are agreed upon; and accordingly, tho' we allow the greatest Latitude, *Paradise* must certainly be found somewhere betwixt the Fountains of the two Rivers and their falling into the *Persian Gulf*: But this Latitude we need not, indeed can't reasonably allow; inasmuch as Mr. *Carver* is mistaken in his notion of the rise of the two Rivers; they both indeed rise out of *Taurus*, but out of different parts of it; the Spring of the *Tygris* is at the South foot of *Niphates*, and that of *Euphrates*, according to those who bring 'em nighest on the North side of that ridge of Hills: Others carry it farther off, and deduce its origin from far more Northern parts of the *Armenian Mountains*. Rejecting therefore this notion, we must bring the Country which has any Title to the Seat of *Paradise* within a far narrower compass, even within the known meeting of the two Rivers at *Apamia* below *Babylon*, and there separating before they fall into the *Persian Gulf*. And upon this supposition

LET. 2. tion an Answer may be return'd to the  
 ~~~~~ latter part of the last Exception: For,  
 as the time of *Adam's Fall* was but a
 short time after he came into Being; so
 the place he fell in was a Garden, given
 him in the land of *Eden*. Indeed, in
 which part of it this Garden was we
 can't exactly tell; but whereabouts in
 the Earth this Country was *Moses* plain-
 ly declares: It was situated upon a Ri-
 ver, or had a River running through it;
 which all along this Country continued
 one, but afterwards divided into four
 Streams. Two of those Streams (says
Moses) were *Hiddekel* and *Perath*, or
Tygris and *Euphrates*; which is a demon-
 stration that the River which water'd
 the Land of *Eden* was that great Stream
 which was the result of the conjun-
 ction of the two known Rivers after
 their meeting nigh *Apamia*. Here there-
 fore on each side, or at least on one side
 of the Banks, was the Land of *Eden* si-
 tuated, and (however its extent from
 the River side is not specify'd) it seems
 to have gone along the River as long as
 it continued one: *The River went out of*
 Gen. ii. 10. *Eden* (says *Moses*) *to water the Garden*;
 therefore during its stay in that Land it
 continu'd one; and from thence it was
 parted and became into four Heads; or
 upon

upon its entrance into and leaving the Land it was divided into four Branches; if it outreach'd it Northward, it went out of it there; and if Southward, it went out of it there; but both these it did; (a River went out of it, that is, it ran through that Country into the Garden to water it, says the learned Bishop Patrick) and it was divided into four Streams when out of it; two we have in the *Tygris* and *Euphrates*, and the other two, tho' we should not know, yet as the River, as long as it staid in the Country of *Eden*, continued one, that Country must of necessity be discontinu'd at their separation. Hence is the Extent of the Country of *Eden* sufficiently determin'd: For, as we learn that it could not reach farther much than *Apamia* Northward, as two of the Branches of the River it stood upon were the *Tygris* and *Euphrates*, which unite there, and consequently from thence the River is parted into two of the Branches requir'd; so it could extend no farther than to the Head of the two Channels which discharge the great River into the Sea Southward; there also the River went out of the Land divided into two Streams, possibly the same which *Moses* has recorded, Upon what part of the great River the Garden was situated

LET. 2. ted I think we can't tell exactly; it seems from *Moses* to have been nigh either *Erec* or *Babylon*, because the River is said to go out of the Country of *Eden* to water the Garden: Which of these places bid fairer for it possibly it can't now be satisfactorily determin'd: If by a River's going out be meant in *Moses* only the Channels extending it self farther than the Country propos'd, then we can't tell whether *Erec* or *Babylon* bid fairer for the first Garden's situation; in this sense it went out of the Land in both places: If by its going out be meant also the course or tendency of its Current, then *Erec* carries the point, inasmuch as the tendency of the great River is into the *Persian Gulf*. And inasmuch as this seems to be the more natural signification, and withal *Erec* stands as fair as *Babylon* even in the other, if these Motives have any weight, it seems with the most right to be given to *Erec*. But upon this Point I shall not stand; whether it were situated nigh either of 'em or lay betwixt 'em, inasmuch as it must do one of the three, this is enough, in my opinion, to answer the above-nam'd Difficulty.

For all reasonable Men must acknowledge that it is not look'd upon as requisite, in order to the gaining of Credit to
matter

matter of Fact, that we have the *time* LET. 2.
 and *place* in the nicest adjustment. Were
 this to take effect, it would introduce an
 hitherto unheard of Scepticism even in
 matters of the latest date. Should we de-
 ny that such a great General took ano-
 ther Prisoner, because we have not ac-
 count to a Minute what a Clock it was
when, and to an Inch of the place *where*
 he was taken; tho' the thing be related
 by Witnesses of uncontroverted Credit,
 and has not been very many Months mat-
 ter of Fact; should we discard such a
 matter of Fact (I say) because the Cir-
 cumstantials of *time* and *place* are not
 thus nicely adjusted, certainly the wiser
 part of Mankind would look upon us as
lunatic for our pains. This shews that
 exact nicety as to *time* and *place* is not
 expected in matters which have been very
 lately transacted: And in matters more
 remote, as is evident from the Conduct
 of all the sober part of the World, less
 accuracy in these Particulars is requir'd;
 and that in proportion to the remote-
 ness of the matter; which are reasona-
 bly judg'd to be true, tho' we have not
 comparably so exact an account of 'em
 as we have of things transacted yester-
 day. I need not bring instances to prove
 that this has all along been the Conduct

LET. 2. of Mankind; it is notoriously known that in ancient Histories a degree of Accuracy as to Circumstantials less in proportion to their greater Antiquity, is not only born with, but expected. And upon this account the History of the *Fall* so circumstantiated as it is, may with reason, and consonantly to the practice of the wisest of Mankind, be receiv'd. It is well known to be part of the eldest History, the Record of one of the first notable Transactions which happen'd in the World: Upon this score therefore, if it brings all other reasonable Credentials along with it, tho' the *time* and *place* be something loosely determin'd, it ought not to be discarded: Tho' we know not exactly *when* and *where* the thing was done, this can't, in the common Sense of Mankind, justify us if upon this score we go about to reject the History of the *Fall of Adam*. Besides that, it may be observ'd that the *time* and *place* in this great Transaction are, considering all things, even more than sufficiently specify'd. The *time*, we know, could not be a Year after the Creation, as we are sure that *Adam* and *Eve* had no Child in their Innocence; and yet without doubt they had one before the first Year expir'd: Indeed most Men believe it happen'd very soon;

some

some upon the sixth Day, and most others LET. 3.
not very long after: Whereas let it be
specify'd within a Year, and how many
matters of Fact of prodigiously later date,
come far short of it as to Accuracy in this
respect, 'tis impossible fully to shew here;
every one who is tolerably conversant in
Chronology, can't be wanting in multi-
tudes of Instances. And the place too is
known to have been within a moderate
compass; within the concourse of the
Tygris and *Enphrates* at *Apamia*, and there
parting again below *Erec*, before they
are discharg'd into the *Persian* Gulf:
Somewhere upon this great River was
the *Fall* of Man: Possibly nigh *Babylon*,
or probably not far from *Aracca*; which
Circumstance of place is well fix'd also;
better than that in many far less ancient
Histories; considering that the Trans-
action we are upon happen'd before the
ravage made upon the Face of the Earth
by the Flood.

Thus is the latter part of the Objection
at first propos'd, I think, fully answer'd:
If *Paradise* was 'twixt *Babylon* and *Aracca*,
the place where the *Fall* happen'd is suf-
ficiently adjust'd; and that it was, is
past all doubt: Two of the Branches of
the River which went out of *Eden* to
water this Garden were the *Tygris* and

LET. 2.



V. Burnet's
Archæolog.
lib. 2. cap. 7.
& O. R.
pag. 36.

Euphrates, but they are Branches of no River in the World but that I contend for, and therefore upon or nigh that River, beyond all dispute, *Paradise* was situated. 'Tis true, Dr. *Burnet* will have the River which went out of *Eden* to water the Garden, to have had its rise in *Eden*: From *Moses's* account, says he, it is apparent, that either in the entrance or exit of the Garden there were four Rivers, and that those four Rivers did proceed from one and the same Fountain-head in *Eden*; and upon this Supposition he asks, where this Country and these Rivers are to be found? Whereas, if it is read without prejudice, certainly *Moses's* account implies no such matter as that the River it stood upon rose in the very Land of *Eden*; And a River went out of *Eden* to water the Garden; A River too goes out 'twixt *Surry* and *Middlesex* and waters the Skirts or Borders of *Kent* and *Essex*; but does it follow from thence that the *Thames* of necessity has its rise either in *Surry*, or *Middlesex*, or both? No such matter: 'Tis well known to be compounded of the two Rivers *Tame* and *Isis*, the first of which rises in *Buckinghamshire*, the other near *Cirencester* in *Gloucestershire*, which are united together in one Stream by *Dorchester* in the County of *Oxon*:

Oxon: After the same manner may a River go out of the Land of Eden without being necessitated to any such thing as taking its rise in that Land. Neither is it apparent from the Words of Moses, that either in the entrance or exit of the Garden there were four Rivers: *And a River went out of Eden to water the Garden, and from thence it was parted, and became into four Heads; from thence,* here may signify as well from its going out of Eden, as from it leaving Paradise; and if so, I know no Exception against two of these Branches being at each end of the Land of Eden: The River went out at both ends; and from thence, that is, from its going out at both ends, it was divided into four Branches. But I shall inlarge no farther upon these Particulars. 'Tis evident, that were we not able to determine, in any tolerable measure, where Paradise was, it by no means follows from thence that there never was such a place as Paradise. This I have made appear in my Answer to the former part of the Objection propos'd. It is evident also that we are able to determine so much of the situation of Paradise as is sufficient to remove all Exceptions against the Fall upon its account; this I have, in the second place, made appear in an-

LET. 2. swer to the second part of the Objection
 against my first Head; And upon this
 latter Particular I might have enlarg'd,
 had I not thought what has been said
 upon it sufficient to answer my end. To
 those who think the *Tygris* and *Euphrates*
 Branches of the River of *Paradise*, what
 has been said must be sufficient, as a de-
 monstration that the Land of *Eden* was
 situated in the place where I contend;
 they are Branches of no River but that
 where I fix *Eden*, and consequently that
 must necessarily be the River which went
 out of that Country to water the Gar-
 den. If any admit not *Hiddekel* and *Pe-
 rath* to signifie these Rivers, if they are
Allegorisms, I can't be expected to find
 out an earthly *Paradise* for 'em; if they
 fancy neither them nor the Land of
Eden capable of being now discover'd;
 they may rationally answer the whole of
 the Objection with the former of the
 two Answers propos'd: It does not fol-
 low from the different Sentiments Men
 have entertain'd about its situation that
 there never was such a place as *Paradise*;
 on the contrary multitudes of Sentiments
 about a thing almost demonstrate its be-
 ing, at least they give the highest proba-
 ble evidence for it; we have therefore
 the highest reason for the once existence
 of

of *Paradise* which can be had for so old LET. 2.
a matter of Fact. And being so sure of
the reality of the place where the Scene
of the *Fall* was laid, the Transaction is
rescu'd from being discarded upon ac-
count of the suppos'd fictitiousness of the
Country and Garden where the thing
happen'd.

One word upon the reasons of the
wonderful diversity of Notions which
Men have entertain'd about the situation
of *Paradise*, and then I shall add no more
upon this Head. Indeed to give an ac-
count of many of 'em is impossible; un-
less it be sufficient to say, that they are
owing to that vanity which is predomi-
nant in some Men, of taking delight in
advancing strange Notions. And this I
take to be the ground of all the Fancies
advanc'd by the allegorical Gentlemen;
by such as plac'd *Paradise* in the Moon;
and by those who thought it safer in an
enchanted Mountain: These and such
like Whims are apparently the result of
some Mens giving liberty to an exorbi-
tant Fancy; and therefore no better ac-
count can be given for 'em than for the
actions of a Madman. As to those who
plac'd it upon our Earth, every one of
'em, tho' never so wide from its true si-
tuation, have some little to say for them-

LET. 2. selves: Some believ'd that by the ravage made at the Deluge the marks which *Moses* gives of *Paradise* are quite destroy'd, and consequently that therefore it could not possibly be more than conjecturally determin'd; and accordingly they thought that they had a right to guess in the case as well as others; which therefore they made use of, and the result of it in different Men was the fixing *Paradise* in *Europe*, *America*, or *Africa*, under the Poles, or beyond the torrid Zone. Those who plac'd it in *Asia* but at a great distance from where it ought to be, have something more to say still; it was believ'd upon the *Ganges* by some, because part of the Country upon that River was inhabited by *Havilah* the Son of *Jactan*: In *Cælo-Syria* by others, because a part of that Country had the name of *Eden*: In other places by others for several such like inconclusive reasons. Some Men believ'd the *Nile* and *Ganges* the *Mosaic Pison* and *Gihon*, from a mistake about the two Lands of *Cush* and *Havilah*; a thing impossible to have been, inasmuch as 'tis utterly inconceivable that ever they should have been Branches of the same Stream. 'Tis true this notion is espous'd of late by a learned Man; but certainly without the least shadow of reason;

reason; for no unprejudic'd Person can LET. 21
 imagine it in the least a likely thing that
 ever the Nile and Ganges were Branches
 of the same Stream; or that the Foun-
 tains and Springs of Rivers are as much
 alter'd since the Creation as this *Hypo-*
thesis requires: The Deluge had the grea-
 test effect in these matters; whereas what
 it had is well known to be inconsidera-
 ble in this respect; not by almost infi-
 nitely far so considerable as this Fancy
 requires; that is, as to alter the Chan-
 nels of great Rivers for some thousands
 of Miles upon the face of the Earth.

A word or two upon the two Trees
 which *Moses* tells us stood in the middle
 of the Garden shall conclude this Letter.
 The Tree of Life he names first: And
 here it is thought a little odd that *Eter-*
nity should grow upon a Tree any more
 than *Humanity*, or any other abstract En-
 tity: 'Tis ask'd also, whether more such
 Trees would not have been wanting if
 Men had continu'd in their state of In-
 nocence? And it may be farther ask'd,
 whether the Fruit of the Tree of Life
 conferr'd Eternity upon those who ate of
 it by its own Efficacy, or Sacramentally?
 Which Difficulties, and these ate all
 worth answering, which I have met with,
 a few words will sufficiently remove. In-
 deed

LET. 2. deed they are so trifling that 'tis a shame
 they should be brought by Considerable
 Men against a matter of such vast Con-
 sequence as the Historical Construction of
 the Mosaic account of the Fall of Adam.
 The first is only a Difficulty in the way
 in which it is worded; Eternity can't
 grow upon Trees any more than other
 abstract Entities; But then on the Tree
 mention'd by Moses, such Fruit might
 grow as, taken upon occasion, might
 contribute to the perpetual continuance
 of humane Life; at least we see no such
 thing as a contradiction in this Suppo-
 sition; whereas we have not by far suffi-
 cient reason to discard it till we evident-
 ly see so much in it. If Mankind had
 not fallen, doubtless more Trees of this
 nature would have been spread over the
 face of the Earth; but after Adam and
 Eve fell, the rest were spar'd, and this
 was remov'd. They were fitted for a state
 of Innocence, and when that was forfeit-
 ed upon pain of death, they became more
 than useless; whereas had the first state
 continu'd, doubtless where-ever they had
 been wanting they would have been to
 be found. As to the Question, what
 way the Fruit of the Tree would have
 conferr'd life, we can't possibly answer
 it, because nothing is reveal'd in the case;
 but

but then all Difficulties are remov'd if we LET. 21.
say that the thing might be done whether
of the two ways best pleas'd God. 'Tis cer-
tain God might entail eternal Life upon
Mens eating at such a time such a deter-
minate Fruit, as he is pleas'd to annex
the gift of Grace to a due reception of
the Elements in the holy Sacrament;
neither is it impossible but that he might
make a *Species* of Fruit of such an efficacy
as that they might, taken at some deter-
minate distant times, repair all interme-
diate failures in the Animal Life. Thus
are these Questions answer'd; and the
Tree which light Men have taken the Li-
berty to make merry with, tho' mostly,
yet fully vindicated, as to its real Being.
It is attended with no absurdity, and
upon any other account in the world
it ought not to be run into an Alle-
gory.

Indeed I think it so far from being at-
tended with any the least absurdity, as
to be on the contrary not only useful,
but of considerable, not only natural but
moral Consequence in the state of Inno-
cence: If Men had continu'd Innocent,
'tis well known they would never have
seen Death, it being by Sin that Death
made its entrance into the World;
whereas we can't conceive how a Body
so

LET. 2. so constituted as ours could endure to all Eternity; it must therefore be kept in such a capacity either immediately or otherwise by the Ordinance of God Almighty; which as he might do by a simple act of his own Will, without making us sensible of it; so he might also annex it to something to be done on our sides, and that frequently, in order to make us constantly sensible of our dependance for it. The latter of these two means seems to be eligible by a God who would not lose any proper motives or inducements to our Obedience; this therefore was chosen; and the Condition on our sides was, that we should upon occasion eat of the Fruit of a certain Tree call'd the Tree of Life: (inasmuch as something sensible must be chosen, I know nothing more proper and natural than this) Which Tree, if we suppose to confer Eternity in a Sacramental manner; that is, so as the Elements in the *Eucharist* confer the Grace of God, not by natural Efficacy, but by divine Institution; it declares, in a double respect, the Goodness of God in instituting such an Ordinance: First, As he made the remedy of our natural Incapacity to endure to eternity so very easie; And Secondly, In that he so contriv'd this Ordinance,

as thereby to make us the most sensible of LET. 2.
 our daily dependance upon him with re-
 spect to the continuance of our Life. Both
 these things are absolutely consonant to
 God Almighty's subsequent Conduct in
 his intercourse with Mankind; which
 has always tended directly to the encrea-
 sing of motives to Morality in the World;
That Grace which, since the Fall, can only
empower us to do good Works pleasant and
acceptable to God, (as our Tenth Article
 expresses it) God might have furnish'd us
 with by a simple act of his own Will,
 without exacting any thing from us as a
 mean whereby to procure it; whereas,
 in order to make us the more sensible of
 our dependance for it, he has wisely an-
 nex'd it to something to be done on our
 parts, to daily Prayer for it, without
 which we must never expect it; and in a
 more especial manner to a due reception
 of the holy *Eucharist*; which if duly pre-
 par'd for, we receive; our Bodies re-
 ceive not more Strength and Refreshment
 from the Elements here made use of, the
 Bread and Wine, than our Souls do from
 that Grace which is in an abundant mea-
 sure conferr'd upon every worthy Com-
 municant. I the rather take it for gran-
 ted here, that the Tree of Life conferr'd
 Eternity in a Sacramental way than other-
 wise,

LET. 2. wise, inasmuch as I think this way the most contributing to our being duly sensible of our dependance upon God Almighty in the case; as in the case of Grace we think more immediately of our dependance upon God, as the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is order'd, than we should were the Elements to be conceiv'd as naturally efficacious. This Hypothesis I therefore rather incline to; not that as I prefer it I see any such thing as an absurdity in the other; doubtless God Almighty might, if he so thought fit, endue a Fruit of a Tree with such a virtue as might enable it, often taken, to contribute efficaciously to the perpetual duration of humane Life.

Against *the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil* I know but of one, and that a very frivolous, Exception: 'Tis wonder'd how *Morality* can grow upon Trees. Indeed, so it may, and be look'd upon as impossible, without affecting what *Moses* calls *the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil*. The Devil (we know) told *Eve*, that the Fruit of that Tree would make 'em as Gods, knowing Good and Evil: From hence we may suppose that it had its denomination; and it is here so call'd by *Moses* by way of *Anticipation*: Or else we may suppose, and which I look upon

V. Nicholls
Conf. part
1. p. 203.

as a more natural Supposition, that it **LET** was so call'd, because God intended by this Tree to try *Adam* and *Eve* whether they would be good or bad. Thus is the Name of the Tree accounted for; and this no way affects the Fruit which grew upon it, or speaks any virtue or efficacy in it more than ordinary. God might forbid our first Parents the Fruit of what Tree he pleas'd, and from their abstaining from, or taking of that Fruit, be so what it would; he would know whether they would be good or bad; not that this was discover'd by any virtue or efficacy in the Fruit; the taking or refusing shew whether they would be obedient or disobey, and that of whatever *Species* were that particular Fruit the Penalty was laid upon: It was not the Fruit but the Man's taking of it which shew'd his Disobedience; much less would the Fruit more than the Man's abstaining from it have shewn his inclination to obey.

Some Men are pleas'd to enquire what kind of Fruit they were which grew upon these two famous Trees. But this, inasmuch as it is not reveal'd to us, we are not oblig'd to endeavour to answer. That there were such Trees we are told, and against their once real Being 'tis enough

V. Bishop
Patrick on
Gen. ii.

P. 41. &
I may find
p. 11. d. 11

LET. 2. enough if we can answer all Difficulties and Exceptions; which I think I have sufficiently done, and therein vindicated Moses in this particular as a plain Historian. As to *Geropius Becanus's* opinion, that the *Indian Fig-tree* was the Tree by the Fruit of which God try'd *Adam*, 'tis a mere Chimæra; which he embrac'd purely in order to advance his following beautiful Allegory. But I shall add no more, having already exceeded the moderate bounds of a Letter; and I think vindicated sufficiently in the first specify'd Particulars *Moses*, in his account of the *Fall of Adam*, as a simple Historian. I shall proceed in my next, begging leave in the interim to subscribe myself,

S I R,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER III.

SIR,

ANother Branch in Moses's History of the *Fall of Adam*, against which divers Exceptions are made, is the *Law given to Adam for tryal of his Obedience, and the Penalty by which that Law was enforc'd*: The *Caveat* enter'd by God Almighty against his eating of the Fruit of a certain Tree in the Garden, and the Punishment entail'd upon the transgression of that Command: The Words in *Moses* which give us an account of these Particulars are these: *And the Lord God* v. Gen. iii. *commanded the Man, saying, Of every Tree* 16, 17. *of the Garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* This is the first positive Law which God gave to Mankind with no less a Sanction than death upon the breach of it, in order to secure its being the more religiously observ'd: And against this Law thus establish'd, both as it appears at first sight, and more especially as it is explain'd by some of the Writers of the New Testament, several seemingly very

F

momentous

LET. 3. momentous Exceptions are made. 'Tis ask'd, How it could consist with God's infinite Wisdom to give *Adam* such a seemingly ludicrous Law as this for the tryal of his Obedience in his first state of *Supra-lapsarian* Knowledge and Excellence? And 'tis look'd upon as a blot upon his Goodness that he should punish with so much rigour and strictness seemingly so trifling an Offence. These Difficulties are charg'd upon the very Letter of *Moses*; and the Explication given of the Penalty in the New Testament renders this Head, in the eyes of many Men, liable to more and greater Exceptions still: For there we are told, that in the first Sin not only *Adam* but all his Posterity were concern'd. And here it is ask'd, Whether or no the infinite Goodness of God is reconcilable with his fore-knowledge of the *Fall* of Man? And how it can be answer'd, even in common Justice, to involve in the Guilt and Punishment of *Adam's* Sin Millions of Millions of yet innocent Beings because yet unborn? There we are told also, say they, that the enforcement of the first Law was not only Death, but Death eternal, everlasting Punishment, God's Wrath and Damnation, as our Ninth Article expresseth it. And here it is made a Question, Whether it is

con-

consonant to infinite Justice to punish eternally temporal, nay momentary, Transgressions? These latter Difficulties arise from Constructions which, tho' not apparent from the Letter of *Moses*, belong to him in the eyes of infallible Penmen: Which therefore I will endeavour to answer as well as the former; in order to shew that in its utmost extent there is nothing either express'd or imply'd in this Head prejudicial to the Historical Construction of *Moses's* account of the *Fall of Adam*. I shall be as brief upon each Head as I can consistently with a Solution of the Difficultys therein contain'd.

The first Difficulty then is, *How it could consist with God's infinite Wisdom to give Adam such a seemingly ludicrous Law as Moses speaks of for the tryal of his Obedience in his first state of Supra-lapsarian Knowledge and Excellence.* *Adam*, it is suppos'd, antecedently to his *Fall*, was a Being of far brighter and more glorious Faculties than we can now pretend to; his Understanding was more comprehensive and clear; indeed as far above ours as it was made in the Image and Likeness of God; for 'tis thought that ours, in its present lamentable Deficiency, carries not the least resemblance of the divine absolutely perfect Exemplar: And his Will was pure

LET. 3. and upright, unfully'd with the blackness of Sin, unsunk into that miserably deprav'd Condition which was the result of the first Lapse or Transgression. To him was the Law given; and the Giver of the Law was no less wise a Being than God Almighty. Now, the Lawgiver being God, 'tis certain he was able to give the fittest Law which could be devis'd; and the Party to whom the Law was to be given being a Creature no less oblig'd to God, and no less sensible of his Obligation, and by that sense tied to obedience than was *Adam*; 'tis thought that a Law of greater weight, difficulty and excellence, what would have carry'd its Author in its countenance, and, if kept, have shewn the consummate Wisdom of *Adam* in obedience, might have been expected: Whereas when all this comes off with an Apple, Are not our expectations widely frustrated? Does not God's dealing thus with *Adam* look more becoming us with our Children? After he had been so much beholding to God, 'tis thought he might have been look'd upon as capable of being try'd by a far greater and more difficult Command.

In

In answer to which it may be observ'd, LET. 3. that, if all things be consider'd, it will soon be made appear that this Law was far from being so trifling and ludicrous as some Men are pleas'd to imagine: Its end was the tryal of *Adam's* Obedience; whereas, if it answer'd that end, as well as any which could be given, the charge of its being Ludicrous immediately vanishes; and that it answer'd this end as well as any could, may be shewn in a few Words. 'Tis certain no Law could be so properly given for this purpose as one purely positive; look over all the Laws in the *Decalogue*, and you won't find one which could with any manner of propriety have been made use of in this case; and to those more general ones are all the other Classes of moral Rules reducible: And if only a positive Law could be given in this case, that must be either the Commandment or Prohibition of a thing naturally indifferent, of any such thing which pleas'd God; for all things of an indifferent nature were, as they were indifferent, equally serviceable to the end propos'd: If therefore an indifferent matter would do the business, what reason is there why this might not be made choice of by God as well as another? As to its Ludicrousness it is there-

V. Bishop Patrick on Gen. ii. 17. & Nicholls's Conference part 1.

LET. 3. fore vindicated, it was as capable of answering the end God propos'd, as an indifferent matter, as any which could be made choice of; and inasmuch as some one was to be made choice of, why not this as well as another, it having the same right? God's preference of it we may safely resolve into his own good pleasure; it had as good a title, as an indifferent matter, as any of the rest, and therefore he might, without giving us any reason for his so doing, pitch upon it: And yet, possibly, some likely Conjectures may be made why he thought fit, in his infinite Wisdom, amongst numberless diversities of indifferent things, to make choice of it as the first *test* of *Adam's* Obedience. The Tree was always before *Adam's* eyes, at it was convenient that thing should be by which his Obedience should be try'd; the Fruit were, no doubt, the most beautiful of any in his Eye-sight, which would make him the oftener have an eye upon 'em, give the *Devil* more opportunities of suggesting Temptations to him, and shew the greater measure of Obedience did he resist 'em. And that the matter of his Probation should be above all things else, a most lovely Fruit is most consonant to the design of the tryal, which

was

was to see whether or no he would be LET. 3
obedient to the Will of his Maker, of
Him who but now brought him out of
nothing, and bestow'd upon him all
things requisite for the happy continu-
ance of his duration; which as, consider-
ing these things and the Abilities of *Adam*,
it ought in reason to be try'd in a con-
siderable instance; in what could it be
better done, than in proving whether he
would prefer Reason before Sense, the
dictates of his superiour Faculties before
the gratification of his sensitive Appe-
tites? Certainly his Obedience could be
try'd in nothing more properly than in
this; and consequently nothing could be
more properly made choice of to try him
by than the forbidden Fruit. Thus is
this Law fully vindicated; it shews God
its Author, it being as reasonable as any
which could be propos'd; and as it could
not be a matter of Morality, every thing
is taken off which might otherwise be
said against its inward Excellency. And
as to its being so easie; if it was really
so easie as is fancy'd, the more the Good-
ness of God in putting *Adam* to no severer
a test: Whereas 'tis certain it was not
so easie but that it was broken, which
must satisfie any one who considers what
Circumstances *Adam* was in when he

LET. 3. broke it, that it was not altogether so triflingly easie as is vulgarly imagin'd. These things, in my opinion, give an unexceptionable account of the reasonableness of the first Law by which *Adam* was try'd: And thus as rational an account is given of *the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil* as has been already of *the Tree of Life*. *The Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil*; that is, the Tree whereby God chose to prove *Adam* whether he would be good or bad; whether he would obey or disobey: And the Fruit of a Tree was the rather made choice of for his tryal in this case, because God Almighty thought fit to try him in a considerable instance; whereas he could do it in no greater, than in trying whether he would prefer obedience to his Maker before the gratification of his sensitive Apperites; and this could be done no better, (inasmuch as his Palate, to him who could not commit Adultery, would make the most vigorous Assault) than in prohibiting him the use of a certain lovely, and, as he might imagine, delicious Fruit.

The next Difficulty is, *How it could consist with the infinite Goodness of God, to inflict no less a Punishment than Death upon such a seemingly trifling Offence:*
That

That *Adam* should be doom'd to die for LET. 3.
 eating an Apple; this is thought very
 hard, and what could not possibly come
 from the hands of an infinitely good
 God: Whereas this Exception is remov'd
 if the Offence, in this case, was not by
 much so slight as is pretended; and this
 I think it very far from having been;
 possibly it may be shewn one of the great-
 est Sins that ever were committed. If
 we consider the thing it self, it was cer-
 tainly no simple and trifling, but a com-
 plicated and heinous, Offence: It argu'd
Adam and *Eve* of Infidelity; they would
 not have committed it, had they believ'd
 that the Punishment, by which it was
 enforc'd, would certainly follow it; it
 shew'd their contempt of God, in under-
 valuing his Threatnings, and preferring
 the Solicitations of their Tempter before
 the Commands of their Maker; it was
 an evidence of the blackest Ingratitude,
 that they would not return God the least
 degree of Obedience in lieu of the many
 unspeakable Benefits which they could
 not but be sensible, in the highest man-
 ner, that he had then lately conferr'd; it
 was a demonstration of their vain Curio-
 sity and ambitious Pride, of their Blas-
 phemy and Presumption; nay, in some
 respects or other, it was a breach of all
 the

V. Usher's
 Body of
 Divinity,
 page 119.
 Ed. 8.

LET. 3.

the Ten Commandments. And as the Sin was thus complicated, so, if we consider it, there were several Circumstances attending it which render'd it in all respects a most grievous Offence; it was committed against a great God, whose Glory and Majesty they had but lately seen and convers'd with, and whose Power they were in the highest manner sensible of, as he had but lately brought them, and the World about 'em, into Being, out of Darkness, and Emptiness, and Nothing; and it was committed by *Adam* and *Eve* in full Light and their ordinary Perfection; when they could not but see what a deform'd Monster Sin would be did it ever come into Being, what a slur it would cast over the Creation, and what a corrupt Infection it would spread far and wide through all the Air they breath'd in: And if they knew, as certainly they did, tho' *Moses's* concise account of the Matters does not clearly record it, that this first Sin should have an influence upon all their Posterity, then were they guilty of the greatest Barbarity in the world in committing it; they were guilty of doing, as far as they knew, an inremedyable Mischief to Millions of Millions of innocent Beings who should come out of their Loins, (for as yet they knew

knew nothing how Merciful Almighty LET. 31
 God would be to 'em after their Transgression) which was certainly such a piece
 of Cruelty as could never since be parallel'd. These things put together render *Adam's* first Sin no such peccadillo as
 some unthinking Persons are pleas'd to imagine, but one of the greatest Sins in
 the world; which, consequently, well deserv'd to have such a Punishment inflicted upon it as is specify'd by *Moses*.
 Thus have I answer'd the Difficulties which are charg'd under this Head upon the Letter of the *Mosaic* History.

What are charg'd upon it as it is constru'd in the New Testament come now to be consider'd. Now there we are told, that not only *Adam* but all his Posterity were concern'd in the first Transgression; that as he then lost his original Innocence, so we all lost ours in him, every Man of the Seed of *Adam* being naturally far gone from that original Righteousness which was stamp'd upon our first Parents at their Creation. The result of which Disaster is, That we are in our present Nature averse from Good, and as naturally productive of Evil: The consequence of which Perversity of our Nature is no less than all the moral, and, at least, most of the natural Evils to be met with in the
 World,

LET. 3. World. Now that when *Adam* forfeited his Life, all died in him, that when he lost his Innocence we all became Sinners, not only very many particular places therein, but the whole method of the New Testament Dispensation sufficiently demonstrates. In particular this is declar'd in *Ephesians* the 2d, and the 3d V, where all Men are made *by nature the Children of Wrath*: And by whom we are so made it appears in the 5th of the *Romans*, from the 12th Verse to the end of the Chapter; Even by *Adam*; by him Sin enter'd into the World, and Death by Sin, (and so Death pass'd upon all Men) *in whom all have sinn'd*, or inasmuch as in him all have sinn'd. And as particular Texts speak this, so the design of the Gospel-Covenant supposes the same Truth, which is to conclude all Men under Sin, that God might have mercy on 'em in a much better Dispensation than the first, that by *Jesus Christ*. Now taking this for granted that in *Adam* all die, that from him his whole Posterity derive a certain proneness and proclivity to Evil, which is naturally productive of Sin, as that by the Law of God is follow'd with Death; 'tis ask'd, whether or no it could consist with the Goodness of God, who foreknew what would happen, to create a World which

which he knew would shortly be invol-
ved in Sin and Misery? Nay, How he
can be said to be commonly Just in con-
cluding all Mankind under Sin in the
Loins of *Adam*? These two Difficulties
are advanc'd under this Head: To each
of which I will give you such an An-
swer as, at least in my own opinion, will
sufficiently remove 'em.

It is ask'd then, in the first place, *Whether it was consistent with the Goodness of God to create Man when he knew he would soon fall from the Purity he first made him in; and in lieu of his primitive Beauty, would in a little time be a Scene of nothing else but Horror, and Sin, and Misery?* If he can do nothing but what is good, consequently he can't possibly have made the World in its present Circumstances; but let it be made in what Circumstances it would, he knew that in a short time it would fall into those we now find it in; which, miserable as they are, seem to bear hard upon God's Goodness, who foreknew these matters, that ever he created it. This is the first Difficulty. And as forcible as it seems to be, possibly it may be remov'd: Not by denying that God foreknew what the World in a short time would come to, (tho' it has been done of late, 'tis certainly a matter of

LET. 3.

V. Taylor's
Two Cove-
nants, page
130. &c.

of very ill consequence to deny God Almighty's prescience of future Contingencies) for he certainly foreknew it, and does all the undermining actions of Free Agents; but from the very Nature of God 'tis demonstrable that his foreknowledge of the *Fall* of Man was not sufficient to impeach his Goodness in the creation of him: For that God is Good is demonstrable, as well as it is that he is Wise and Just; and he has these and all other his Attributes necessarily and without limitation; that is, he is necessarily infinitely Good, as well as infinitely Just and Wise: And if he is, and always was, necessarily infinitely Good, consequently he neither can, nor ever could, act any thing inconsistent with infinite Goodness; and therefore he did not act inconsistently with infinite Goodness when he created the World, notwithstanding his foreknowledge of the *Fall* of Man. Thus is this Truth demonstrated, That the infinite Goodness of God is by no means impeach'd in the case before us: He can do nothing which really impeacheth his Goodness, any more than he can destroy Himself, or cease to be who necessarily is; inasmuch therefore as he has created the World, notwithstanding his foreknowledge of Man's *Fall*, we must necessarily

farly conclude that so to do has no pre-
judicial Aspect upon his infinite Good-
ness. 'Tis true, as conclusive as this Ar-
gument is in favour of the thing, yet the
difficulty about the *Modus* is never the
more unravell'd; neither indeed is there
any necessity for it, inasmuch as the Que-
stion is not about the *Modus*, but the
Thing; whereas our ignorance of its
Modus is no objection against a Thing's
actual Existence. But let us put the Que-
stion about the *Modus*, and try to shew
not only *that it is*, but *how it is* consi-
stent with God's infinite Goodness to
have made the World, notwithstanding
his foreknowledge that Mankind would
shortly Fall.

And here all Men must confess, that it
is not only consistent with, but an adora-
ble act of Goodness in God to create ra-
tional voluntary Agents in a happy Con-
dition; and capable of continuing so,
and improving to eternity, if they are
not wanting to themselves. We see no-
thing in this Conduct which has any the
least ill Aspect upon God's infinite Good-
ness; but it is demonstrative of the con-
trary, as it shews him willing to com-
municate of the brightest Jewels in that
Crown of Happiness which Himself en-
joys: Or if there is any thing in this case
which

LET. 3. which the most scrupulous Minds can take offence at, it must be this; when God has created and instated Rational Beings in this Happiness, that he should leave it in their power to lose it: Whereas, did Men rightly consider matters, they could not possibly raise this Difficulty; for had he not left 'em the power of losing that Happiness he had instated 'em in, he had, in effect, instated 'em in no Happiness at all; it being impossible for involuntary Agents to be happy; indeed as much Happiness is, comparatively speaking, enjoy'd by a Stone falling to the ground, as by a Being of the brightest Intellect, if it is necessarily pre-determin'd in all its Operations. The Happiness of a Rational Being consists principally in making, or being sensible that in time it shall be able to make, such like Reflections as these: That in all respects whatever, it has chosen to act up to the dignity of its Nature; that, when it might have been wicked, it has run in nothing counter to the eternal Laws of Reason and Morality; that, when it might, in the eye of the Rational World, have debas'd it self below the very meanest Class of created Beings, it has, on the contrary, taken all the best methods of improving every Jewel in that Diadem which

*V. Whaley's
Discourse
of the Con-
sistency of
God's
Goodness
with his
foreknow-
ledge of
the Fall of
Man.*

it was intrusted with when it first came LET. 3.
out of nothing; that in thus doing it has
merited the just esteem of the whole Ra-
tional Creation; and that it has hereby
secured even the applause of God, instead
of giving him the trouble of repenting
that ever he brought it out of nothing:
That Being which can, or is sensible that
in due time it shall be capable of making
these and the like Reflections, is as ratio-
nally Happy as a Creature can be; and
without such as these, there can be no
such thing in a Creature as rational Hap-
piness: Whereas 'tis impossible that any
such Reflections should be made by an
involuntary Agent; and therefore no in-
voluntary Agent whatever, of however
bright and glorious intellectual Faculties,
can possibly be rationally Happy. What
Beings therefore God might be suppos'd
to have created thus, he might also have
put in a happy place; but then he had
deny'd 'em the whole of the greatest
which is communicable to Creatures;
that is, rational Happiness. It is cer-
tainly then as transcendent an evidence
of God's Goodness as can be express'd to
create voluntary Agents in a present hap-
py Condition, and capable of continuing
in it, and improving it to eternity, if
they are not wanting to themselves.

LET. 3. If God therefore create any rational Beings with a design to make 'em happy, he must necessarily make 'em voluntary Agents; such as the continuance and promotion of whose first Happiness depends in a great measure upon their own voluntary determination of their free Actions. Upon which Supposition, if we admit also that God pre-determin'd the Redemption by *Jesus Christ*, supposing a *Fall* in *Adam*, which he as certainly did as *Adam* fell, and *Jesus Christ* in the fullness of Time came into the World, I think the Question before us may be answer'd, How it could consist with God's infinite Goodness to create Man, notwithstanding his foreknowledge that he would shortly Fall: For if he would create him in a happy Condition, 'tis certain he must create him a free Agent; as which, he would have a power of falling; this gives a good account why, inasmuch as he did create him, he made him a free Being; and as he saw that did he create him he would fall, if he saw also that by a pre-determin'd Redemption Millions would be recover'd from the Ruin they were involv'd in by the *Fall* of *Adam*, and be inexpressibly Happy to all Eternity; here is a reason for his creating those many Millions, tho' they

they once were so unhappy as to Fall: *LET.*
And if others would not take the benefit
of the Redemption propos'd, but proceed to involve themselves deeper in Sin and Misery, 'tis no way chargeable upon God; his Goodness was no less infinite to them than to the former: And if in creating 'em he had a design equally good to all of each Class of rational Beings; consequently as his design was good to all, and he knew would take infinitely good effect in very many, his Goodness is absolutely vindicated if it was consonant to it rather to create some who he foresaw would make themselves miserable, than to deny Thousands of others, for their sakes, the advantage of coming into Being in order to be inexpressibly and eternally Happy; whereas this it visibly is, it is no way affected by those who are ruin'd, inasmuch as they ruin themselves; whereas to deny a great many Beings infinite Happiness because they can't come into Being unless others come along with 'em who will make themselves unhappy; this does really bear hard upon the Goodness of God; and consequently it's opposite, that God should create the Race of Man, notwithstanding he foreknew that some by coming into Being would only be enabl'd to involve

LET. 3.  themselves in ruin, is absolutely consistent with his infinite Goodness. Which was the thing to be prov'd. The Argument in short is this: 'Tis absolutely consonant to God's infinite Goodness to create rational Beings in order to be happy, but no rational Beings can be happy unless they are voluntary Agents, therefore it is consonant to the infinite Goodness of God to create rational Beings who shall be happy to Eternity if they are not wanting to themselves. 'Tis true, in creating any Class of such Beings, many of 'em he foresees will turn what he design'd for their benefit to their own disadvantage; but he is no way to blame for that; and 'tis certainly infinitely better that these take their lot, than that, for their sakes who deserve nothing, or never shall deserve any thing, God should surcease from Creation, and thereby deny Millions of others infinite Happiness, which they would have secur'd, had they been brought into Being. Doubtless, before ever God created 'em, he foresaw the Fall of many angelical Beings; and before he made Man, he foresaw that part of the Race of Mankind would be its own Ruin: Indeed 'tis hard to conceive that every Individual of a Class of voluntary Agents should answer the end of their Creation; but

but if any Fall, 'tis not God's fault: Whereas LET. 3.
to deny a whole Class of Beings existence
for their sakes, is to with-hold infinite
Goodness from those who would deserve
it for the sake of those who are so far
from meriting, as to demerit at God's
hands.

It is ask'd in the next place, *How it could
consist with the Justice of God Almighty to
conclude all Mankind under Sin in the
Loins of Adam*; to make *Adam's Sin* be
answer'd for by all succeeding Genera-
tions; so that I must suffer for what I
knew nothing of, nor could forward or
hinder because I was yet unborn: This
is look'd upon as a very hard saying, that
the Guilt of the Sin of *Adam* should be
imputed not only to him, but to all that
follow him. In order to the clearing of
which Point, I will first lay down what
our *Church* from the holy Scriptures deli-
vers concerning *Original Sin*; and then I
will attempt briefly to vindicate the Ju-
stice and Goodness of God from all the
Aspersions which bold Men have cast
upon 'em upon this score. The sense
our *Church* has of these matters is deli-
ver'd in her *Ninth Article* in these words;
*Original Sin standeth not in the following
of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly
talk) but it is the fault and corruption of*

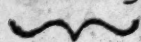
LET. 3. *the Nature of every Man that naturally is ingender'd of the Off-spring of Adam, whereby Man is very far gone from original Righteousness, and is of his own Nature inclin'd to Evil; so that the Flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and therefore in every Person born into this World it deserveth God's Wrath and Damnation. And this Infection of Nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the Flesh, call'd in Greek φεγνυα σαγρος, which some do expound the Wisdom, some Sensuality, some the Affection, some the desire of the Flesh, is not subject to the Law of God. And altho' there is no Condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the Apostle doth confess, that Concupiscence and Lust hath of it self the nature of Sin. In which Words it is suppos'd that the Fall of Adam had an evil effect upon all his Posterity, and that not only a natural but a moral one; and that this effect is what in every Person born into the World deserveth God's Wrath and Damnation; the effect it self is that our Nature is corrupted, and that Adam and Eve being by their Fall a deprav'd Stock, have brought forth no other than faulty and corrupt Branches; and this effect is look'd upon as having of it self the nature of Sin, and therefore deserveth God's Wrath,*

Wrath, as is not only express'd here, but LET. 3. also is taken for granted where-ever it occurs either in the *Profession* or *Practice* of our *Church*; as every one knows who has read the *Catechism* in the former, and all, or any of the *Offices of Baptism* in the latter case. This is what I conceive to be taught in this *Article* concerning *Original Sin*; and if Matters be rightly consider'd, I believe God's Justice may in this case be vindicated; nay possibly it may be shewn that his suffering the universal spreading of *Original Sin* was with an infinitely good and gracious Intention. Of both these Particulars in their order. And First I will shew that God's Justice is no way affected by his suffering the universal spreading of *Original Sin*.

And here it is to be consider'd that we have no countenance from the words of the *Article* for supposing what in the Objection is imply'd, and what St. *Austin* and his Followers held; that *A Covenant was made with all Mankind in Adam as their first Parent: That he was a Person constituted by God to represent 'em all: And that the Covenant was so made with him, that if he had obey'd, all his Posterity should have been happy through his Obedience, but by his Disobedience they were all to be esteem'd to have sinn'd in him; his*

V. Bishop
Burnet on
Art. 9.
pag. 113.
Ed. 2.

LET. 3. *act being imputed and transferr'd to 'em all.*



In this case it must be confess'd to be very hard for me to suffer for a Sin committed by one who died some thousands of Years before I was born; especially if by Suffering is meant eternal Punishment, as by some is imagin'd: Whereas if only simple Death and Dissolution, the matter may be accounted for; a right to discontinue our Being being as much in God's hands, and as justly put into execution by him when he shall think fit, as he had a right either to create or not create us before we came out of nothing; which we know he might with strict Justice have not done as well as done; Nothing having no pretensions in the world to a right of being brought into Being. But then *Original Sin* in us is no such thing as an *imputation* of the Sin of Adam, but a *corruption of Nature* which Adam, being deprav'd, convey'd of necessity to his first Off-spring; and they down to others, to continue as long as the World endures: A corrupt Tree could not bring forth good Fruit, neither could Eve bring forth a Progeny better than her self; but as she, after her Fall, was averse to her *Original Righteousness*, and inclin'd to Evil, she brought forth Children of the like evil Affections with her self; and they continue

tinue to do the like; and thus we all LET. 3.
 come with evil and corrupt Affections
 into the World. This Depravation of
 our Affections is *Original Sin*, as it is ow-
 ing to the first Transgression of *Adam*,
 by which the Stock was deprav'd, and
 render'd incapable of shooting forth any
 other than corrupt Branches. And against
Original Sin thus explain'd, I think there
 are no Difficulties which may not be re-
 mov'd. It may be ask'd, How any such
 thing as a moral Depravation of Nature
 can be propagated? 'Tis answer'd by
 some, That the manner of the propaga-
 tion of *Original Sin* may be in part by the
 method of our coming from our Infancy
 to the state of Manhood: We are Weak,
 say they, in our Infancy, and sensitive
 Impressions, during our younger Years,
 have such effect upon us, as in time to
 bias our Affections for Sense, and there-
 by to bring us into the Condition *Adam*
 fell into; that is, to subject our superior
 to our inferior Faculties; to render us
 prone to Sense, and averse to rational
 Perfection; which state of Degeneracy
 is what in us is meant by *Original Sin*:
 Whereas this Answer is invalid, as upon
 many other accounts, so demonstratively
 upon this, that we are no sooner born
 but we stand charg'd with *Original Sin*;
it

LET. 3. it is convey'd to us therefore far sooner than can be suppos'd in this Solution: And this conveyance is most rationally explain'd thus; 'Tis well known that the most material passages in the Imagination of the Mother have a wonderful influence upon the Child in the Womb; if she is suddenly frighted, sometimes the motions thence resulting are communicated in so violent a manner as to take away the Child's Life: If she is violently transported with Joy the effect is the same: A Face has made such an impression upon some, as to make 'em communicate the Features of it to the Infant in the Womb; nay the Faces of Images have so affected some, that they have brought forth Children exactly of their Complexion, tho' never so strange and unusual. To these and the like purposes you may find many very wonderful Stories in those who have writ of the power of Imagination; and as a strong Imagination, tho' perhaps but of short continuance, has such wonderful influence in the formation or destruction of the Body of an Infant in the Womb, even so long and eager Inclinations to Evil, make considerable Impressions upon, and almost weave Vice into the very Nature of its Soul; which, being as yet a *rasa tabula*,
takes

takes all Impressions which are made first, LET. 3.
and inclines ever after, very strongly, to
that way to which it receives its first
bent in its Mother's Womb. Thus is
our *Original Corruption* propagated; and
thus it must be, unless Providence extra-
ordinarily interposes in the case, that the
Child be tainted with those inclinations
and tendencies to Vice which affected the
Mother during its strict union with her
in the Womb. It is ask'd then, whether
it were Just in God Almighty to suffer
the Propensity to Evil, which our first
Parents contracted by the Fall, to be tra-
ductive? I answer, It was as much so as
it is to permit Distempers contracted by
disorderly Parents to descend to their in-
nocent Posterity; a thing which is every
day done, and yet none are so hardy as
to charge God with Injustice in this pro-
ceeding: We can challenge nothing of
God before we come into Being, and
therefore 'tis madness to charge his Ju-
stice that he made us not rather Angels
than Men, rather one than another sort
of Beings. But then if *Original Sin* is
traductive, then 'tis necessary; and if 'tis
necessary, how can it merit any such
thing as *God's Wrath and Damnation*?
'Tis answer'd, That if by *God's Wrath
and Damnation* be meant only temporal
Death,

LEI. 3. Death, as some expound it, God may inflict this when he pleaseth without the least Injustice, he having the same right to discontinue as he had at first to give Being; and it being denounc'd against all in such and such corrupt Circumstances, they having antecedently no right to continuance in Being, may, when God pleases, be discontinued upon this account. If by *God's Wrath and Damnation* is meant *everlasting Torment*, I answer, That every thing that is tainted with Sin, is for that reason necessarily infinitely odious to God, who is a Being of purer eyes than to behold Iniquity; and therefore it merits nothing but *Wrath* at the hands of God as it is corrupted; not that God designs to execute Vengeance upon those out of whose power it was to prevent their Corruption, if they are guilty of nothing which deserves it afterwards: He had no such design as this in concluding all under Sin: On the contrary, I believe it may be shewn to be one of the greatest instances of Mercy in the World that God permitted the moral *κακῆγία*, contracted in the *Fall of Adam*, to be at the first, and continue for the future, traductive even to all Generations.

For

For he knew that unless he concluded **LET. 3.** all under Sin, he could not have Mercy upon all; nothing being the Object of Mercy but what has demerited: Unless he had permitted *Original Sin* to be traduc'd, whereby all Men would of course come short of the first Covenant, *the Covenant of Works*; he could not so advantageously have set on foot that much better and more merciful Dispensation, *the Covenant of Grace*; which as much as it is preferable to the former, by so much more is the Goodness of God shewn, in order to its being able to take effect, in concluding all under Sin: Had not God Almighty permitted the Original Corruption to be traductive, but continu'd the Law of Works, keeping every one in order to the performance of it, in that originary Perfection in which he made *Adam*, then every one who had sinn'd had been irrecoverably ruin'd; and how many would have thus sinn'd and been ruin'd, we may guess from considering that the least slip had death intail'd upon it, that Mankind in that state were left to stand upon their own Legs; and if we may judge of the Fate of those who were to follow from those who came first, as they fail'd, 'tis to be fear'd most who came after 'em would do the like. Thus are

LET. 3. are we furnish'd with a very dismal prospect had Mankind continu'd under the first Covenant, *the Covenant of Works*; none could sin under it but he was irrecoverably ruin'd; and it is to be fear'd few would have been capable of living without Sin: This God Almighty foresaw, and this in his infinite Goodness and Mercy he was willing to remedy; and for this certainly he could provide no better a remedy than the *Covenant of Grace*: Wherein he offers Terms of recovery to fallen Mankind, by accepting of the death of his Son as a ransom for them, and requiring only sincere, tho' not unfeigning, Obedience, in order to Salvation: He expects no such thing as perfect Obedience; but when we Fall, our Breaches may happily be made up by a hearty Repentance; and in order to make our duty the more easie, he promises us, as part of the Purchase of his Son's Blood, the assistance of his *blessed Spirit*, in order to enable us *to do Works acceptable to God*, and to bring us off Conquerors in all Straits and Emergencies. 'Tis true, none but Sinners could be admitted into this Covenant of Mercy, which as God was willing that it should take effect upon all Men, therefore he concluded all under Sin, that he might have mercy upon all;

all; therefore he suffer'd the Original LET. 3.
Corruption to be traductive, as it would
certainly bring all Men under Sin, and
thereby render 'em capable of being ad-
mitted into *the Covenant of Grace*. Thus
is God's permission of the traduction of
Original Sin shewn to result from his
great Goodness, if *the Covenant of Grace*
did so, which, if strictly consider'd in all
its particulars, must be own'd to be the
most amazingly transcendent act of *Mer-*
cy and Loving-kindness which God Al-
mighty could possibly express to the
World.

We are told farther in the New Testa-
ment, that the enforcement of the first
Law was not only Death, but Death
eternal, everlasting Punishment; That
the wages of Sin in Adam is eternal death, V. Rom. vi.
23.
as sure as the gift of God in *Christ is*
eternal life; That in Adam all die, as in V. 1 Cor.
xv. 22.
Christ all are made alive; that is, eternal-
ly: The Punishment inflicted upon Sin,
when the Law was first given to *Adam*,
was of the same extent with the recom-
pense promis'd to Obedience in *Jesus*
Christ; that is, everlasting. At least, if
some Men will not allow that the death
entail'd upon *Adam's* first Transgression
can be concluded from the New Testa-
ment to signify *everlasting Punishment*, 'tis
certain

LET. 3. certain that in *the Covenant of Grace* they who come short of their Duty must undergo this Sentence; they who *tread under foot the Blood of God*, shall themselves by him be cast into *everlasting Fire*; they who *count the Blood of the Covenant* wherewith they are sanctified, an *unholy thing*, shall themselves be much more so esteemed, and as such treated for ever and ever; and they who *do despite unto the Spirit of Grace*, shall for their base Insolence be cast into that *horrible Pit of Destruction*, where *the Worm never dies*, nor shall they, tho' under the constant lash and torment of it; and where the Fire is unextinguish'd *day and night for ever and ever*, in which their portion is to be assign'd *em with the Devil and his Angels for evermore*. Now the Question is, upon this Supposition, *How it can consist with the infinite Justice of God to inflict eternal Punishment upon temporal Transgressions?* And this I believe, of whatever difficulty some Men have been pleas'd to conceive it, I may answer to the satisfaction of considering Persons in a few Words.

For it is allow'd by all the World that there is no necessity of making the Punishment proportionable either in measure or continuance to the Transgression; but that a Punishment may be inflicted greater

the Fall vindicated.

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greater than the Advantage gain'd by the Fault committed. This is consonant to the Opinions and Practices of all the wisest States and Statesmen that either are or ever were in the World. By the *Athenian* Laws a Thief, when discover'd, was not only bound to make double restitution, but he was also kept some days in custody for his Misdemeanour. In *India*, as *Strabo* observes, he that maim'd any one did not only suffer the like Injury in the same Part in which he mitchiev'd his Neighbour, but had his Hand cut off, over and above simple retaliation. Consonant to which practice is this determination in *Aristotle*; that it is fit if a Man put out his Neighbour's Eye, that he not only suffer the same, but also have a farther Punishment inflicted upon him. And at present we hang Men for Theft, and yet a Man's Life is valu'd at a far greater rate than Money or Goods. Indeed 'tis most highly reasonable that, for Terror's sake, and in order to make good Laws of the more efficacy and influence, the Punishment much exceed the Mischief accruing to the Party offended from the Fault committed; nay 'tis not only reasonable, but necessary in Human Policy, without which the best of Laws would be of little purpose to ends they are

H other.

V. Gröt. de
Jure Bell.
ac Pacis.
l. 2. c. 201
3. 32.

LET. 3. otherwise capable of serving for the good of Society; and it is justify'd by God in several of those *Statutes* which he gave to his own People the *Jews*; as in the case of Robbery, where the Thief is obliged to recompense the Party injur'd proportionably to the Damage, four or five fold. Thus is it evident, in the eye of God and Man, that there is no necessity the Punishment be proportionable to the Sin committed, Indeed in all defaults whatever, not that Punishment is made choice of which comes nearest in proportion to the Crime, but that which is capable of serving the best ends, which is of most advantage to the Party or Parties offended; and whatever as to quantity and quality it be, it is look'd upon as wise and just when it is best for the satisfaction, security and advantage of the Bodies which have suffer'd, whether private, or public, or both. This is what is own'd as just by all Men of Reason, nay and by God too in the *Jewish Law*, to make the Punishment greater or less, not regarding the proportion or disproportion it bears to the Crime committed, according to the best public or private ends it is capable of serving. Upon which supposition, I think, 'tis not difficult to account for the Justice of eternal Punish-

Punishment for temporal Transgressions: *LET. 3.*

For if Punishments may be inflicted greater than the demerit, so they answer better and wiser ends than less would, and this with Justice and Equity; then the greatest need not be spar'd if they are likely to be of the best consequence; and if so, God Almighty is easily vindicated in inflicting eternal Punishments upon temporal Sins: There is no necessity here that he proportion the Punishment to the Crime; on the contrary, what Punishment will best deter Men from Sin, as it will answer the design of punishing best, and attain the best end, consequently it ought in Reason, and Justice, and Goodness to be chosen: But none whatever can deter Men so effectually from Sin, as the entailing the Penalty, upon those who commit it, of everlasting Damnation; and consequently this is the most unexceptionable Punishment of Sin which could be pitch'd upon. It is absolutely just as the justice of Punishment is not measur'd by the proportion it has to the Sin, but by its greater fitness to remove the necessity of punishing; and it is absolutely good too, as it is the greatest preservative in the world against Men's involving themselves in Sin, and thereby alienating their unhappy Souls

LET. 3.

from the enjoyment of God and Heaven. Thus is God's Conduct fully vindicated in threatening temporal Sin with eternal Damnation ; and if he may justly threaten it, inasmuch as he can't either threaten or promise unjust things, consequently if any, notwithstanding these Threats, will venture upon Sin, they stand liable in the strictest Justice to be everlastingly damn'd.

I know nothing which can with any shadow of reason be objected against this Argumentation but this ; That as we do not conclude of the Justice of Punishment from its bearing greater or less proportion to the Crime punish'd, but from the goodness of the ends to which it is serviceable ; So, when it is serviceable to no ends at all, we have nothing whence to denominate it just, and consequently it seems not capable of being justly to be inflicted : Tho' it be granted therefore that God may lawfully denounce eternal Damnation to us in this World, upon our commission of, and continuance in, Sin, because this denunciation may serve several very great ends ; principally in the keeping us from Sin, and thereby securing us a Title to the Kingdom of *Heaven* ; yet for inflicting it upon those who miscarry in this World

at

at the Day of Judgment, no reason can be given in the eyes of some Men! No good end can be serv'd by it upon those who are punish'd, inasmuch as their state is irremediable; nor upon others, as far as we know; whereas as a good end warrants the greatest Punishment of a disproportionate Transgression, so 'tis look'd upon as utterly unwarrantable in God or Man to punish for no end at all; and consequently, tho' God may threaten it, yet he can't actually put his Threats in execution, by punishing temporal Sins with eternal Damnation. But this Objection may be remov'd several ways, and in a few words. For if it were just for God to threaten, it must be so for him to execute his Threats; else he threaten'd to do what was not just, which a Being of necessarily infinite Justice possibly could not. As to the punishing for an end, the benefit of the Party punish'd, or some other Persons, this, indeed, is requisite in Men; for so near is the relation of Men in Society one to another, that no Man ought to take upon him to punish his Neighbour but for some good end, his Own, or his Neighbour's, or the World's advantage; but then the case is otherwise with Almighty God; he is not ty'd by these obligations of Parity and

LET. 3.
V. Grot. de
Jure, l. 2. cap. 20.
§. 4.

H 3

Relation,

LET. 3. Relation, but has a supreme right of dominion, which he may lawfully assert in punishing those, and that eternally, who have so demerited at his hands. Besides that, possibly a good end may be shown for God's punishing those who die in their Sins with everlasting Damnation: May it not be to continue those in their indefectible state of Happiness who shall be thought worthy of Heaven? Indefectible, not Naturally, for no created Being can be so; nor by being over-ruled by God, necessity seems to be utterly inconsistent with Happiness in rational Agents; but their having the Torments of those who fall always before their eyes, may so affect 'em as always to keep 'em from falling: Their seeing how bitterly all who transgress are to suffer to all eternity, is one of the strongest rational Motives which God could contrive to keep them from falling, lest they involve themselves in the same Destruction. This may be God's end in punishing Sinners with everlasting Damnation; and against its Sufficiency, in order to vindicate his Justice in the case, I think no Objection can be made.

And this Solution enables me to remove the only Exception I am aware of against the account I have given of the

V. King de
Orig. mali.
Append. S. 2.

con-

consistency of the Goodness of God with
 his foreknowledge of the Fall of Man. LET. 3.
 there shew that it is consonant to God's
 Goodness, rather to create some who
 should be damn'd, than for their sake to
 deny others Being, who would, did they
 come into Being, by the regularity of
 their actions, procure a title to Heaven.
 And this all Men must grant upon sup-
 position of the impossibility of a Class
 of Creatures coming into Being without
 some sort of falling. Whereas it may be
 said, that inasmuch as God foreknew
 who should be damn'd long before they
 were created, might he not have deny'd
 those Being, who he foresaw if they had
 it, would in a short time be eternally
 ruin'd? this seems most consonant to in-
 finite Goodness, whereas to create those
 who he knew would be damn'd, that
 much as their Damnation, tho' justly de-
 serv'd, would serve no end, seems a Dif-
 ficulty still; an action not easily recon-
 cilable with a Goodness of infinite ex-
 tension. To which it may be answer'd;
 'Tis well known that God was no way
 oblig'd antecedently to any Creation at
 all to bring only those into Being who he
 foresaw should be sav'd; those who shall
 be damn'd having no right antecedently
 to their Creation to challenge continu-

LET 3. ~~ance~~ of Non-existence at his hands; neither did he create 'em with a design to make 'em miserable, but they make themselves so; and having a Being, tho' a miserable one, their demerits are too great to challenge, with any reason, its discontinuance. But this only vindicates God's Justice in the case. What absolutely clears his Goodness too is this, the contrary to which in the Exception is taken, for granted, that very great ends are capable of being serv'd by creating and continuing in Being not only those who should be serv'd, but even the Vessels of Wrath and Destruction; no less than the preserving indefectibly in their Obedience, those who shall at the latter Day have secured themselves of a title to the Kingdom of Heaven and everlasting Happiness. Thus is God's Goodness in creating a Class of Beings, part of which shall make themselves miserable, unexceptionably vindicated. Infinite it is to those who shall deserve it, and those who only merit at his hands have no shadow of reason to challenge it; on the contrary, inasmuch as their continuing Examples of Vengeance will contribute to one of the best of ends, the preserving those who shall be happy in their Obedience; Here is God's Goodness wonderfully shewn to those

those who deserve it: And it is no way affected in his continuing the Vessels of Wrath everlasting Monuments of the mischief of Disobedience; on the contrary, it is here most gloriously display'd, as it is an argument of the greatest Goodness in the world that God leaves no Stone unturn'd to secure those whose Names shall be found written in the Book of Life, in an everlastingly indefectible state of Obedience.

And now I have answer'd the most considerable Exceptions made against the Mosaic Account of the first Law given to Adam, and of the Penalty by which it was enforce'd; and those not only what arise from the very Letter of Moses, but such as are found in it from the Constructions put upon it by the Writers of the New Testament. I know of no other under this Head which are the least worthy of notice. Some indeed will ask, Whether it is not what ought to have been expected from an infinitely good God to have kept that Pair from falling, upon whose Conduct the Fate of all future Generations was to depend? To which it may be answer'd, in a few words, That it was not. God can't act against one for the security of another of his Attributes; whereas had it not been a breach in

LET. 3. in his Wisdom to solemnize a Law, and confirm it with a Penalty to be inflicted upon the breach of it, and at the same time to keep the Party to whom it was given from being able to break it. What should we think of such Conduct as this were it practis'd by Kings upon Earth? Indeed it would be laugh'd at: Much less can any suppose such a thing of the King of Heaven, without demonstrating the meanest Sense in the world of his infinite Wisdom. Besides that, God fore-saw that were that Law broken, as it would in time have an evil effect upon all Mankind, so that would be turn'd by the Redemption he design'd to the greatest Good; thereby the *Law of Works*, calculated for *Man* in his *uprightness*, would be capable of being exchange'd for *that of Grace* adapted to *fallen Man*, and by which, in all probability, Millions more will be sav'd than would have been had the Sin of *Adam* not been made traductive, but *Adam's* Off-spring been kept upright in order to be try'd by the Law of rigour. DO THIS, AND LIVE; that is, obey the Commandment I have given thee; or, IN THE DAY THAT THOU EATEST THEREOF THOU SHALT SURELY DIE: For the least breach of it thou shalt be involv'd in irrecoverable Ruin.

God

God therefore having an eye upon the **LET. 3**
 other Dispensation, might very consi-
 stently with his infinite Justice, as well
 as Wisdom and Goodness, permit the *Fall*
 of *Adam*. But here I need not enlarge;
 what I have hinted upon *Original Sin* I
 look upon as sufficient to enable any one
 to vindicate the Goodness of God in per-
 mitting the *Fall* of Man. Excuse, Sir,
 this long Letter; I was willing to answer
 all the Difficulties I rais'd at the begin-
 ning at one time; which I hope I have
 fully done; and thereby vindicated *Mo-*
ses upon this score as a plain Historian
 I am,

I proceed now to the second
 of the *Fall* it self; of the means by which
 it was effected, and of the time in

it was effected, and of the time in
 fluence it had upon *Adam* and *Eve* as
 soon as they had receiv'd it.

Yours &c.
 to the third Head which I propos'd at
 first to clear from all Exceptions; The

account of the Instrument which the Devil
 made use of in his first assault, and of the
 immediate future consequences which at-

tended the disobedience of our first Parents.
 The account of these Particulars given
 by *Moses* is this: Now the Serpent was

more subtle than any Beast of the Field
 which the Lord God had made; and he
 said unto the Woman, Yea, hath God said,

LETTER

LETTER IV.

SIR,

HAVING clear'd up all the Difficulties which are charg'd upon the Place and Furniture of that Place where *Adam* fell; and having fully vindicated the reasonableness of that Law which God gave him to walk by, and the Justice of the Penalty by which that Law was enforc'd; in order to render *Moses*, in these Particulars, capable of being Historically constru'd: I proceed now to the account of the *Fall* it self; of the means by which it was effected, and of the immediate influence it had upon *Adam* and *Eve* as soon as they had transgressed; that is, to the *third Head* which I propos'd at first to clear from all Exceptions; The account of the Instrument which the Devil made use of in his first assault, and of the immediate strange consequences which attended the disobedience of our first Parents. The account of these Particulars given by *Moses* is this: Now the Serpent was more subtile than any Beast of the Field which the Lord God had made; and he said unto the Woman, yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every Tree of the Garden?

Gen. iii. 1,
2, 3, 4, 5,
6, 7.

den? And the Woman said unto the Ser-
 pent, we may eat of the Fruit of the Trees
 of the Garden; but of the Fruit of the
 Tree which is in the midst of the Garden,
 God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, nei-
 ther shall ye touch it, lest ye die: And the
 Serpent said unto the Woman, ye shall not
 surely die; for God doth know that in the
 day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be
 opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing
 Good and Evil: And when the Woman
 saw that the Tree was good for Food, and
 that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a Tree
 to be desir'd to make one wise, she took of
 the Fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave
 also unto her Husband with her, and he did
 eat: And the eyes of them both were open'd;
 and they knew that they were naked; and
 they sew'd Fig-leaves together, and made
 themselves Aprons. In which account,
 the principal Difficulties are about the
 Party tempting, call'd here the Serpent;
 and about the immediate effect of their
 complying with the Serpent's Tempta-
 tion, in that their eyes were then open'd,
 and they found themselves naked, and
 accordingly made them green Aprons to
 cover their new found Nakedness. The
 Matter of this Temptation, or the Fruit
 of the forbidden Tree, I have spoken of
 already, and shewn how proper it was
 for

LET. 4 for the tryal of the Obedience of Adam and Eve: And the Topic the Devil took by which to prevail with Eve to eat of this Fruit, to wit, his telling her that did they eat of it 'twould vastly increase their knowledge, that 'twould make 'em know all things, and be as Gods; must be own'd to be such as was very natural to the Devil; and such as, measuring them by himself, he could not but think most likely to gain his point: It was Pride cost him his Innocence, and therefore he thought no other Topic more proper to proceed upon if he would attempt to rob them of theirs. Only some Difficulties are rais'd about the corporeal Instrument he made use of in this Temptation: (Indeed some deny that he had any hand in the business at all, inasmuch as *Moses* takes no notice of any thing more in the case than the Instrument he made use of; and if the Serpent was concern'd alone, new Queries are made about its power of Speaking, Reasoning, &c.) and the fallen Pair's coming to their Sight, spying out their blind sides, being ashamed of wanting Cloaths, and accordingly turning Taylors and making themselves Aprons; these things, as the immediate effects of the Fall, are farther cavill'd at. All which Particulars I will endeavour to vindicate

vindicate from the Aspersions they labour under; if possibly *Moses* may be shewn capable of admitting a plain *historical* Construction in them as well as other Particulars.

But first let it be observ'd, in opposition to some who, tho' they call themselves Christians, are so bold as to call it into question, that the Devil did really actuate the Serpent in the Temptation of *Eve*; and that the Serpent's being only mention'd in *Moses's* account is by a *Metonymy* vulgarly to be met with afterwards in the Old Testament of the *Instrumental* for the *Cause efficient*. Now that the Devil had to do in this case, and that principally too, is unexceptionably evident, if not from any thing to be met with in the Old, at least from very many passages in the New Testament. 'Tis certain that Party who tempted *Eve* was the *first Lyar*; whereas the Devil is said to be the *Father of Lies*, or *first Lyar*, by our Blessed Saviour: *John* the 8th and the 44th *Verses*. 'Tis certain that same Party was a *Murderer from the beginning*, in bringing Sin, and Death, the wages of Sin, into this World; so was the Devil, *as he is now*, says our Lord in the same *Verses*. The Author to the Hebrews calls him that had

*V. Burnet's
Archæolog.
& O. R.
p. 40.*

the

LET. 4. *the power of Death, the Devil, Hebrews*
 the 2d and the 14th *Verse*; whereas he
 had most properly *the power of Death* who
 brought it into the World, and entail'd
 it upon all Mankind; that is, that Party
 who tempted *Eve* in the form of a Ser-
 pent; who was therefore the Devil:
 Nay from his making use of a Serpent
 upon this fatal occasion, the Devil him-
 self is call'd one, *Revelations* the 12th
 and the 9th *Verse*; and this Devil or old
 Serpent is there declar'd to be what he
 was effectually who tempted our first Pa-
 rents by *Lyes* and *Deceit, the Deceiver of*
the whole World. Thus is it evident, be-
 yond possibility of contradiction, that it
 was the Devil who tempted our first Pa-
 rents under the form or in the body of a
 Serpent. An Angelical Being who had
 some time before lost the favour of his
 Maker and was cast out of Heaven, toge-
 ther with several Legions who were his
 Adherents, and therefore consign'd over
 by Almighty God to the same Punish-
 ment. This Being envying the Happi-
 ness of Man, made it his business to draw
 him into Disobedience in order to bring
 him into his own condition: Being him-
 self revolted from God, as is natural in
 all Traytors even to this day, he made
 it his business to make the breach 'twixt
 God

God and his Creatures as wide as he GEN. 3.4.
could: And having an opportunity of
fer'd of making Profelytes out of a new
Class of Creatures whom God had lately
made, he loses no time, but comes and
discovers by the breach of what Com-
mand their Innocence might be lost;
which he no sooner found but he temp-
ted *Eve* to break it; she comply'd, and
prevail'd with her Husband to be a Part-
ner in her Iniquity; and the Tempter
gain'd his point to his Heart's con-
tent.

But then granting this to be true, that
the Devil was the only Cause efficient in
the Temptation of *Eve*, 'tis wonder'd
how he came to address himself to her in
the form of a Serpent; or to make use of
the body of a Snake wherein to carry on
this unhappy attempt. 'Tis granted in-
deed that if he will address her he must
assume some Body or other; for being of
himself a pure Spirit he could no other-
wise have converse with her; no other-
wise be seen, but as cloath'd with a Bo-
dy; nor heard, unless he was capable of
speaking organically: But then, as he
must of necessity choose some kind of
Body, is it not natural to expect that this
subtile Tempter would have got one fit-
ter for his purpose than this to have
play'd

LET. 4 play'd his part in. It seems as if a Snake would have rather frighted our first Mother than have tempted her; especially when she heard it speak, which as we can't suppose they naturally did before the Fall of Adam, she must have been in all likelihood fear'd half out of her Senses by this talking Viper. This is what is objected against the Instrument which *Moses* tells us the Devil made use of in his first fatal Project upon Mankind, 'tis thought that the Body of a Snake was a very improper Instrument wherein the Devil should attempt to effect what we find happen'd upon this occasion.

Whereas in answer to this it may be considered, that whatever were the corporeal Instrument which the Devil made use of upon this occasion, its fitness may very well be concluded from the execution it did: Besides that, 'tis inconceivable that one so subtle as the Devil should be the least wanting in laying a Plot, especially in whatever since we have found him but too well vers'd, the Art of Temptation; whatever were the Matter of Fact we can't imagine but that he went as craftily about the first Temptation as the thing would admit of; and if the Matter of Fact be rightly understood, possibly his Conduct may be found

by sly

answerable

answerable to what we *a priori* expect LET. 4
and apprehend: For tho' *Moses* calls the
Instrument he made use of a Serpent, yet
it does not thence follow, as is vulgarly
imagin'd, that he meant a common Rep-
til by it. g Indeed the contrary seems to
be intimated in the History it self, inas-
much as whereas the common Snake in
all likelihood crawl'd upon his Belly ever
since the Creation, g that mention'd by
Moses was doom'd to this fate after the
Fall of *Adam*; if there is therefore any
other Species of the Serpent in kind fitter
for this purpose, and against which this
Objection does not lie, we have reason
to look upon that as what the Devil was
beholding to in the case before us; but
this there certainly is, a Species one of
which was not only more adapted to the
Devil's purpose than the common Snake,
but than any other Creature whatever in
the whole World. For there are Serpents
in the Eastern and Southern Parts of the
World which shine very gloriously, ha-
ving bright Wings, and Bodies of beau-
tiful and dazzling Colours: These Ser-
pents are call'd *Seraphims* in *Numbers* the
21st, *Verses* the 6th and the 8th; and in
Deuteronomy the 8th and the 15th. Not
that they were made like unto the highest
Angels, or Angels of the Presence, who

V. Bishop
Patrick on
Gen. iii. 1.

LET. 4. are also call'd *Seraphims* in the 6th of *Isa.* *Verses* the 2d and the 6th, inasmuch as those Angels being immaterial Beings have no material likelihood to be made by: But the Angels are call'd *Seraphims* from them, inasmuch as having need of assuming some Body or other when they appear'd amongst Men, they chose one like theirs rather than any other, as being the most dazling, and beautiful, and glorious, and consequently most fit to represent the place they came from, and to conciliate respect to, and veneration for, their Commission. Now if the Angels of the Presence used to appear in a form approaching to that of a certain kind of beautiful winged Serpents, so high as that upon account of being like 'em they had the same Names, consequently a Serpent of this Species was the fittest Instrument which the Devil could make use of in the temptation of *Eve*; those Beings which daily attended her from Heaven, which made up the train of the *Schechinah*, or *Glory of the Lord*, which they were so well acquainted with at the

Gen. iii. 8. Fall as to know it unseen and at a distance by the sound which attended it, were of a form and splendour resembling the Terrestrial *Seraphim*; which when the Devil saw, we may assure our selves

he would make use of one of those Serpents wherein to transact the business of his too successful Temptation. Hence he had the best hopes of reception upon his address, inasmuch as *Eve* might take him for an Angel of Light whilst he made up to her and saluted her in this Species; and hence he had all the reason in the world to assure himself that what he offer'd would not be successless, as *Eve* would take it to come from Heaven, and as she expected to hear of nothing but what she might safely comply with by a Messenger from that glorious Mansion. Thus is the Serpent sufficiently vindicated as to its fitness for being the Devil's Instrument, if the right Species is understood where only the Genus is express'd; that is, if we suppose that Serpent wherein *Eve* was tempted to have been one of the Seraph kind, a very beautiful winged Serpent, in whose curious form the Angels of the Presence us'd to shew themselves when they came down from Heaven. I know none who have ventur'd to dissent from this account of the Serpent since it was first started by the present Lord Archbishop of Canterbury almost thirty Years ago, but Dr. Edwards in his *Survey of the various Methods of Religion*; (Vol. 1. Cap. 2. Pag. 58, 59.)

V. Archb.
shop Teni-
son on Id.
latrv, cap.
r4. à pag.
35 ad 356

LET. 4. but his reasons for dissenting are far from being so momentous as to do it any the least prejudice. I shall not now stand to transcribe and remove 'em; any one who has read not only them but the two learned Bishops upon this point whom I have lately cited, will find that they need no such thing as formal answering.

The next Difficulties I am to account for are those Particulars which *Moses* mentions as the immediate consequents of the *Fall of Adam*; who tells us, that thereupon they came to their sight, and found each other to be naked; and being ashamed of the discovery, that they stitch'd Fig-leaves together to cover themselves: These are look'd upon by some as very strange incidents; as incapable of being constru'd any other way than *parabolically* upon more than one account: Can we conceive, say they, that *Adam* and *Eve* were blind in their state of Innocence? Certainly this comfortless condition did not suit them in their originary Perfection: Or supposing this, as soon as they came to their sight, what can we make of their stitching Fig-leaves together to make themselves Aprons? 'Tis well known that no such things as Thread or Needles were yet invented: Or supposing these Difficulties accounted for; what tolerable

terable sense can be made of this, that **LET. 4.**
 the eating of an Apple should bring them
 to a sense of Modesty? Heretofore they
 were not asham'd to see each other na-
 ked, (*Genesis ii. 25.*) whereas after they
 had tasted the Fruit of a certain Tree,
 a strange fit of Bashfulness seiz'd 'em,
 so that they could not look at each other
 at a cheaper rate than the expence of
 a blush! This and the other Particulars
 are look'd upon as very odd. And indeed,
 so may any thing in the world be made
 to look, if it is accordingly manag'd;
 whereas, perhaps, a little reflection upon
 each Particular, rightly represented, may
 clearly let us see that they may as well
 put in a claim for an *Historical Construc-*
tion as the other branches of the *History*
of Moses.

For as to their being created blind,
 none, who is not either besides himself,
 or too zealous a well-wisher to the ridi-
 culous representation of every thing that
 is reveal'd, can make such an extrava-
 gant Conclusion from this Expression,
 (*Genesis the 3d and the 7th*) *And the*
eyes of them both were open'd.) This
 Phrase is well known to signify the sud-
 den coming of a thing into one's know-
 ledge which he was not before sensible
 of; as is evident from the manner of its

LET. 4. usage in other parts of holy Writ: And here it signifies their sudden sense of their Folly and Sin in taking of the forbidden Fruit upon the Devil's false suggestion. Thus is this Difficulty remov'd: And the other about sewing Fig-leaves together is not very pressing: It is made by our Translation; whereas the Original which we translate sew'd signifies also apply'd, or put on; and what we construe Fig-leaves may with as good a title to the signification of the Hebrew be render'd Fig-tree-branches; and then they apply'd Fig-tree-branches to their Bodies; and so all Exceptions fall. Thus are these points conquer'd; but then the main Difficulty is, how the eating of an Apple should bring Adam and Eve to a sense of Shame and Modesty, as they discover'd in their making themselves Aprons of Fig-tree-branches, whereas before they had no such sense, nor troubl'd their heads about any Coverings; 'tis look'd upon as impossible that the Fruit of a Tree should have any such quality. This Particular of the immediate effect the forbidden Fruit had upon Adam and Eve, is really the greatest Difficulty under this Head; not that it is so great but that it will admit of a removal if matters be rightly consider'd.

V. Bishop
Kidder in
Locum.

For as God Almighty was pleas'd to LET. 4.
try the Obedience of *Adam* and *Eve* in
no less considerable an instance than the
preference of Reason before Sense, whe-
ther they would obey the dictates of their
superiour Faculties, tho' in the denial of
the gratification of their sensitive Appet-
ites, as I have observ'd already in his
forbidding 'em the Fruit of a certain
Tree in the Garden; it is to be con-
sider'd that according to their behaviour
here, however one single act of Obedi-
ence might not be efficacious in prefer-
ring for the future an exact and due har-
mony and proportion 'twixt the rational
and sensitive part of Themselves and their
Posterity; I say, it is to be observ'd that
however this was design'd by Almighty
God, 'tis certain that one act of Disobe-
dience was to be a strengthening to their
sensitive, and a weakening to their ratio-
nal Parts, and that such as should not be
confin'd to themselves, but be transmit-
ted far and wide to their latest Posterity.
This we effectually see to be matter of
Fact, whatever were the cause of it;
(whether it were deriv'd from the good
pleasure of God, who, previously to the
Fall of Man, ordain'd that so the thing
should be; or from the Constitution of
Adam in his state of Innocence, whose
opposite

LEL. 4. opposite parts of Reason and Sense were
 so adjusted that whenever the one was
 made to preponderate, the other should
 not be able to bring it back to an Equi-
 librium; or from the Fruit of the Tree
 which might possibly be of such a na-
 ture as to work this effect in *Adam* by its
 proper efficacy) For the first Sin was no
 sooner committed but they both imme-
 diately sunk deep into Sensuality; and all
 that follow them feel very sensibly the ef-
 fects of their Transgression in what is
 call'd, since the Dispensation of Grace,
the Old Man. From this it proceeds that
 the *Imaginations of Mens Thoughts* are on-
 ly evil continually; that the *Heart* is de-
 ceitful above all things, desperately wicked,
 so that none can know it, (Jeremiah the
 Gen. vi. 5. 17th and the 9th Verse;) that the *Flesh*
 lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit
 against the Flesh; that the carnal Mind is
 enmity to the Law of God, and is not sub-
 ject to the Law of God, neither indeed can
 be; and that they that are in the *Flesh*
 can't please God, Romans the 8th, Verse
 the 7th and the 8th. This great Cor-
 ruption I have explain'd already in its
 propagation or conveyance down to all
 the Posterity of *Adam*, in accounting for
 the natural communication of *Original*
Sin. How it might take effect so sud-
 denly

denly in *Adam*, if it was only God's good pleasure, no other account can be given of it; if it resulted from the Condition of the first Man and the Nature of the Fruit eaten, I take this to be no improbable account of the matter; That as in the State of Innocence God made Man naturally upright, with a Body craving modestly, and a Mind both Judge and Master of those Cravings; and as his Blood in his first state may be reasonably suppos'd to have been low and cool, and consequently his Spirits wrought off from that Blood sedate and regular, and absolutely at the command and disposal of his superiour Faculties; so this Blood and these Spirits may be suppos'd to have been capable of extraordinary and sudden Inflammation upon their being impregnated with the Juice of a determinate forbidden Fruit; this Inflammation would of course set the inferiour Faculties on fire, so that all would run headlong; Passion and Appetite would break the reins of Reason, the Soul would be taken captive by the Body; and being sunk into Sense, she would immediately lose the relish of every thing in comparison of gross and material Objects. Thus might a vast alteration be wrought in *Adam* upon his eating of the Fruit of the Tree

V. Bishop
Burnet on
Article the
9th, p. 111.

LET. 4. Tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and thus the matter really was, either by the Fruit's efficacy, as I have now explain'd it; or, if I may so say, Sacramentally; such consequences being entail'd by God Almighty upon the eating of such a determinate Fruit. Thus his superiour were brought into subjection to his inferiour Faculties: The Brute got the mastery over the Man; and what was a while ago the Crown and Glory now became a Blot and Irregularity in the visible Creation. This was the effect of our first Parents eating the forbidden Fruit: Which being consider'd we have an evident reason why, after this unhappy Miscarriage, *Adam* and *Eve* were ashamed to find themselves naked.

Gen. ii. 25.

For whereas before this Transgression they were both naked, the Man and his Wife, and were not ashamed; this was owing to their Innocence; to the absolute dominion which their superiour had over their sensitive Faculties: Which dominion, as long as it continu'd, they had nothing to blush at; on the contrary all things being in a due harmony was matter, instead of Shame and Confusion, of Joy and Consolation; whereas after they had eaten of the Fruit of the forbidden Tree, and thereby destroy'd that exact regularity

regularity and sedateness of Constitution LET. 41
 with which they first saw the Sun; after
 they had brought their Reason to strike
 sail to Sense, and rais'd a Band of furious
 Appetites and Passions to be predomi-
 nant in the unhappy Man. Hence com-
 menc'd their first Shame, to see them-
 selves brought into such a wild, and con-
 fus'd, and ungovernable Condition; to
 see their rational Powers out of Com-
 mand, and their sensual Appetites in a
 most irregular and rampant manner as-
 suming the Jurisdiction. Before their Fall,
 so subject were their sensitive Appetites
 to Reason, that, tho' they were both
 naked, they had no such exorbitant De-
 sires rose in their Breasts as Reason needed
 to blush at; or if a motion was made by
 any Appetite at all, Reason being abso-
 lute Mistress of the Soul, it was check'd
 or comply'd with according to the strict-
 est rules of Discretion. Thus far all
 things went well, and they met with no-
 thing which could in the least be matter
 of Confusion: But when they brought
 themselves, by the deadly Fruit, into
 quite other Circumstances, turning the
 rational Faculties out of doors; or, what
 was worse, subjecting, or rather ensla-
 ving 'em to the sensitive and brutal Lusts,
 and Inclinations, and Passions; when
 their

LET. 4. their Appetites grew heady and strong, and would not admit of curb or restriction; then it was that being, and seeing themselves naked, they were ashamed: For being now sunk deep into Sense, such Objects as formerly but lightly mov'd 'em, made deep impressions; and these impressions were follow'd by such furious and craving Appetites as they had not hitherto been sensible of: Which when they found they could not bring to regularity by the methods they had us'd hitherto, they were all in Confusion; ashamed that they should be so much affected by sensitive Impressions; and in a confus'd disorder of Heart and Countenance that they had so far debilitated their superiour Faculties by their fatal Transgressions, as to be utterly unable to stop the Consequences of these and such like Impressions. Thus were they ashamed after their Fall to see themselves naked; ashamed of the ascendant their Lusts and Passions had got over their Reason: Which as they found so very powerful, accordingly they endeavour'd, as the only remedy left, to remove all such occasions as should excite 'em which they possibly could. In the History, Moses tells us, they made Coverings for their Nakedness of Fig-tree branches.

branches. Thus is this whole Point accounted for, relating to the immediate Consequences of the *Fall* of *Adam*. Immediately after they had transgress'd, their change open'd their eyes and let 'em see their folly in complying with the Devil's Seduction: Which change was attended with a new and strange Shame at their beholding each other naked; which now, after they were sunk into Sense, made such impressions as they found attended with irregular Consequences; and which they were ashamed that their deprav'd Reason was not strong enough to evade; but that they must have recourse to a Covering for their defence, if they have a mind to avoid 'em in any considerable measure.

I have now made good what I promis'd in the beginning of this Letter; and shewn that, notwithstanding what has been objected, the *Mosaic* account of the Instrument the Devil made use of in the Temptation of *Eve*, and the immediate effects of the *Fall* when that Temptation was complied with, are very capable of being Historically constru'd: That there is nothing absurd in 'em attending such a Construction; but that if they be rightly consider'd, they may be very rationally and satisfactorily accounted for. Let the

Serpent,

LET. 4.  Serpent, in which the Devil seduc'd Eve, be one of the *Seraph* kind, or one of those beautiful Creatures in whose shape the Angels appear'd, which, together with the divine *Logos*, made up the *Schechinah*, or *Voice*, or *Presence of the Lord*; and then the talking Snake is avoided; and a rational account is given of Eve's listening to his Temptations, as she took the Party, who address'd her upon this occasion, for an Angel of Light. And as for *Adam* and *Eve's* coming to their eyes upon eating the forbidden Fruit, as to their being asham'd of their Nakedness, and sewing Fig-leaves together in order to cover it; these Particulars you see admit of a very rational and intelligible defence, as I have just now made it appear, and therefore need not here trouble you with the least repetition of what is advanc'd upon these Particulars. I shall not now go on to propose or answer any more Difficulties; the moderate bounds of a Letter would be much exceeded did I take in here the Exceptions made against the next Head; which therefore I shall not now, but make them and their respective answers the subject of my next. I am,

S I R,

Yours, &c.

LETTER

LETTER V.

SIR,

Come now to another Class of Difficulties which are rais'd against the vulgar Exposition of this famous History; to that part of the Account wherein the Punishments inflicted upon the Offenders are recorded; wherein God, having come down from Heaven and discover'd from Adam and Eve's being ashamed of their Nakedness, that they were fallen; nay and having extorted out of their own Mouths the matter and manner in a formal confession, proceeds to inflict Punishments upon each Party concern'd in this Fact according to merit: The account of these Particulars in Moses is this: And the Lord God said unto the Serpent, because thou hast done this thou art cursed above all Cattel, and above every Beast of the Field; upon thy Belly shalt thou go, and Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; and I will put enmity between thee and the Woman; and between thy Seed, and her Seed; it shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel. Unto the Woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow and thy Conception; in sorrow thou

Gen.iii. 14,
15, 16, 17,
18, 19.

K

shalt

LET. 5. shalt bring forth Children, and thy desire shall be to thy Husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearken'd unto the voice of thy Wife, and hast eaten of the Tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; Cursed is the Ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the Herb of the Field; in the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat Bread, till thou return unto the Ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return. Against which account the principal Exceptions I have met with are these; How it could consist with the Justice of God to punish the Serpent which was no way in the fault, being actuated by the Devil, and consequently no more to blame for Eve's Seduction than a Pistol is for shooting the King, which is struck off by the Hands of an unnatural Varlet aiming at the Life of his Sovereign: How it could consist with his Wisdom to curse the Ground, when it was neither actually nor passively concurring in this famous Defection: And lastly, how it was consonant to the same to create a beautiful World, which he foresaw he should be necessitated

necessitated to demolish and spoil, and LET. 5.
 that a little while after he had brought
 it, a most charming paradisaical Piece,
 out of darkness, and emptiness, and no-
 thing. When these Particulars are an-
 swer'd, I think this Head will be suffici-
 ently clear'd: And I believe they are ca-
 pable of being satisfactorily answer'd in a
 few words.

And First as to the Punishment of the
 Serpent; this is thought very hard, that
 one Party should suffer for another's
 Fault. Indeed 'tis look'd upon as abso-
 lutely unjust, that God Almighty should
 punish a Serpent for what he could not
 avoid, but the Devil was guilty of. This
 is thought by some a very ill precedent
 from God in his first Transactions with
 his new Creation, and such as encour-
 ages a scurvy latitude in a matter of no
 less public concernment than the admi-
 nistration of Justice in the World. In-
 deed, say they, should Men take this
 hint and punish the *Instrument*, when
 nothing was in the fault but the *cause*
efficient, we should look upon it as un-
 warrantable Conduct; and it would be
 found in several considerable cases a great
 burthen and grievance to the World:
 Whereas if this would be look'd upon as
 wicked in Men, is it not Blasphemy to

LET. 5. attribute such Conduct to the God of Heaven? To that Judge of all the Earth who can't but do right? For whom 'tis as impossible to do any thing which is unjust, as to destroy himself, who is a Being of necessary Existence? This is the Objection here: And, as formidable as it may be look'd upon, I think it a matter of very little difficulty to give it a satisfactory answer.

For what if I should say that in this whole Curse of the Serpent, the Devil, who made use of the Serpent instrumentally, is solely intended? We know he is so call'd in the Revelations, that old Serpent who is the Devil and Satan; and we know it is no new thing in the Old and New Testament to attribute that name or thing to the Cause efficient which immediately and directly belongs to the Instrument, and vice versa: An instance of the latter may be met with in the Prophets of old, where those are sometimes call'd their Words which are only so instrumentally, but efficiently the Words of the Lord: And for an instance of the former, take the 3d Ver. of the 11th Chap. of St. Paul's Second Epistle to the Corinthians, But I fear lest by any means as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your Minds should be corrupted from the simplicity

city which is in Christ; where the Devil, the Cause efficient, is call'd by the name of the Serpent which was his Instrument. Now taking this for granted, that by the Serpent may be, and upon occasion is, understood no other than the Devil, if nothing hinder it may be so taken here as well as elsewhere; whereas matters are so far from hindering here, that all Men acknowledge that the Devil must be understood in some Particulars, and if he is so in all, it seems as if such a construction of the Curse of the Serpent render'd the manner of expressing it more beautiful. For let us suppose that in this place by the Serpent God Almighty means the Devil alone, and he is to pronounce several Curses upon him for being guilty of seducing Mankind; as he calls him a Serpent; is it a strange thing that he thence takes occasion to express the Curses which were to be entail'd upon him, by such natural Infirmities and visible Injuries as the Serpent was most liable, and expos'd to? Indeed so such matter: 'Tis running on in a very beautiful way, and that not so bold neither but that it may be parallell'd on divers occasions in holy Writ: *And the Lord God said unto the Serpent, because thou hast done this thou art cursed above all Cattel, and above every Beast of*

LET. 5. *the Field ; upon thy Belly shalt thou go, and Dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life ; or, And the Lord pronounc'd this Curse upon the Devil for his being guilty of seducing Eve, (whom calling metonymically a Serpent, he runs on in expressing his Punishment by such Evils and Injuries as the Serpent was most expos'd to) that from henceforth he should be remov'd farther still from his first Mansion, that his portion should be not as that of that he made use of, but as that of the vilest Serpent ; he should go upon his Belly, or be deeper than ever involv'd in Loathsomeness and Misery ; living in the lower and smoaky Regions of the Air, says a great Man ; and that he should eat Dust all the days of his life ; or that from henceforth he should utterly lose all relish of Celestial Enjoyments, diverting himself for the future in doing Mischief, a Food as unpalatable to all truly reasonable Minds, as Dust is to Sense : And I will put enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed ; it shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel ; or, And I will stir up an irreconcilable Feud 'twixt thee and the Woman throughout all Generations ; even betwixt all thy Legions and her Posterity for ever ; by her Seed thy Tyranny*

V, Bishop
Patrick on
Gen. iii,
p. 72.

ny shall be abolish'd, and of the power **LET. 5.**
 which thou hast now wickedly usurp'd, 
 thou shalt be despoil'd; and all that thou
 shalt be able to return shall be only this,
 that thou shalt persecute the Woman's
 Seed like a Serpent coming behind, but
 thou shalt not be able to destroy. Now V. Kidder
 if this Interpretation be admitted, that by on Genesis
 the Serpent God means solely the Devil; iii. 15.
 and that from the Circumstances the Ser-
 pent is in he runs on in expressing figu-
 ratively the Devil's Punishment alone,
 then the Objection is evaded. The De-
 vil alone is punish'd, and I think none
 will deny but that he deserv'd the Punish-
 ment he got. I shall not proceed at large
 to justify this Interpretation; only in fa-
 vour of it let it be observ'd, that when
 our Saviour was incarnate upon Earth,
 he took occasion once in his discourse
 with the Woman of Samaria at Jacob's John iv.
 Well to express belief in him and his 10, 14.
 word by Living-water, and by a Well of
 Water springing up unto everlasting life.
 And at the Feast of Tabernacles, on the V. Whitby's
 last and great Day of that Feast, when Paraph.
 the People went with great Solemnity
 and Joy to draw Water from the Foun-
 tain of Siloam to bring it to the Temple,
 singing these Words of Isaiah, *With joy*
shall they draw Waters from the Well of

LET. 5. *Salvation*, and expecting an *affliction* of the Holy Ghost, when our Saviour saw this Solemnity he took occasion from that Water to express want of his Word by Thirst, and faith in him by Rivers of Living-water. And a great part of the 6th Chapter of St. John's Gospel is a famous and well known instance of the like nature. Why might not then the *Logos*, who was the same Person with *Jesus Christ*, and pronounc'd this Curse upon the Devil in the Serpent from his calling him by the Serpent's name, take occasion to express his Punishment by the meanest actions and accidents which the Serpent is expos'd to?

John vii.
37, 38.

But I am not necessitated to stand to this Solution; for admitting that the Serpent really partook of the Curse here pronounc'd, I can see no such injustice in the case as the Objection supposes. God gave the Serpent Being, and consequently it had no farther right to continuance in Being than during the pleasure of the Donor; he gave it also such a determinate Shape or Figure at its first coming into Being as himself saw good; and consequently it had its Figure upon the same terms upon which it had its Subistence and Life, both equally revokable at God's good pleasure. He might therefore,

fore, when he saw fit, take away its Life, LET. 5.
or change its Shape with the same right
with which he first gave it 'em both:
And the same may be said for the first
settling and alteration of its Diet. These
things are absolutely just, supposing the
Serpent had been a rational Agent; For
no created Being whatever can justly as-
sert a right to continuance in Being, any
more than *Non-entity* can lay claim to a
right of Creation; which to assert were
Nonsense in terms, inasmuch as 'tis well
known that Nothing has no such things
as Properties, or Privileges: That con-
tinuance in Being, or a determinate mode
of Being, is what no Creature can justly
lay claim to, is a truth demonstrable in
a few words: For we know that conti-
nuance in Being is not in the Creature's
power, but it depends absolutely upon
the immediate will and operation of the
Creator, so that conservation in Being is
no other than one continu'd act of Crea-
tion; this, you know, is over and over
again demonstrated by the best Metaphy-
sicians; the Creature therefore which is
in Being this Moment, is virtually crea-
ted in order to be the next; for let the
creative Power be suspended now, and
in the next moment it will be nothing;
in order therefore to its being something
then,

LET. 5. then, it must be virtually created now; but as nothing has no right or title to creation, consequently what is of it self virtually nothing, with relation to the next moment has no right to challenge Being for that time. The same may be said for modes of Being, as well as Being it self; no Creature whatever has any right to their continuance, or, to speak more properly, to their continu'd re-production; it is with relation both to them and its being of it self a *Non-entity*, with respect to the next moment; (inasmuch as left to it self it would immediately drop into nothing) whereas as *Non-entity* has no grounds whereupon to challenge creation, consequently no Being which is of it self no other than a *Non-entity* with respect to the next moment, has any right to re-production, or creation, or continuance in Being, as to mode, or substance to, or for that time. Thus is it demonstrated, that had the Serpent been a rational Agent, and consequently a subject capable of Justice or Injustice properly so call'd, it was no Injustice in God to discontinue its old mode of Being; it had no right for the time to come to any Being at all; and consequently could no more challenge a continuance of its old mode of Being than

Non-

Non-entity can claim a right to fixing of **LET. 5.**
terms how, and in what circumstances,
and upon what conditions it will be
brought out of nothing.

Whereas, as the Serpent was no rational Agent, and consequently not the subject of Justice or Injustice properly so call'd, but a Creature made for the service of Man as well as all the other parts and branches of the inferiour Creation: Hence we have not only a vindication of the Justice of God, but we may discover a standing evidence of his Goodness and Wisdom too, in transforming the Serpent which the Devil made use of in the grand Seduction: It was so done for the service of Man, (which is a sufficient warrant, not only in Justice, but Goodness too, for the changing any thing for the better which was design'd for the good of Man in its first creation) in order to be a constant remembrancer to *Adam* of his first fatal Transgression; which would be the greatest excitement in the world to his hearty Repentance for that unhappy Miscarriage; and in order to let him and the World see what an odious thing Sin is in the eyes of Heaven, inasmuch as the first Instrument in which it was committed could not be permitted by Almighty God to go without

LET. 5. out a form of Punishment. Thus is the business of the Transformation of the Serpent, I think, unexceptionably vindicated. There is no Injustice in the case, tho' we should suppose the Serpent a rational Agent; no rational Agents can challenge a continuance either of Being or mode of Being at the hand of Heaven; much less is there any such matter in it as the Serpent is a Creature which was at first, as well as the rest, made for Man's sole service; as thus, a Being capable of doing greater service, is a sufficient justification of an alteration of its mode of Existence. And as God was Just, so he was infinitely Wise and Good in the case; as he did it to make the first Pair ever mindful of their first Transgression; and to give them and their Posterity after 'em a due sense of his hatred of Sin, in that he could not let the Instrument, in which this ugly Monster was hatch'd, go unstigmatiz'd; nay and an Emblem of its real and intrinsic deformity was also set before 'em, when they saw a noble Creature but instrumentally concern'd in it, debas'd, notwithstanding his no higher relation to it, into a vile and despicable condition.

The

The next Difficulty is, To what end or LET. 5.
 purpose, or with what decency God can
 be suppos'd in this case to have curs'd
 the Ground? Was the Ground in the
 fault? Or ought it to suffer for the Mis-
 carriages of its Lord and Master? To
 which, in short, I answer, That the
 Curse pronounc'd upon it was not for its
 own sake, but for his who was lately in-
 vested in the dominion over it; neither
 was it design'd a Punishment to the Earth
 which was not sensible; but, if to any,
 to *Adam* and *Eve*, and their Posterity,
 who would, after it took effect, be forc'd
 to work out a mean Livelihood by the
 sweat of their Brows: I say, if to any,
 for indeed if things be rightly consider'd
 the ultimate end of this Curse was not
 for the real damage and injury, but for the
 benefit and advantage of Mankind; it
 was in order to their spiritual good; in
 order to the prevention of such Enor-
 mities as full Bellies and idle Hours would
 have expos'd 'em to; and which could
 not better be remedy'd than by cutting
 'em out such Work as would by a neces-
 sity of Nature keep 'em better employ'd.
 In order to the illustration of this Parti-
 cular, let one thing be consider'd: It is
 believ'd, not without great reason, by
 an

LET. 5. an ingenious Man, That the Curse here pronounc'd did not take full effect till after the universal Flood; but that tho' Thorns and Thistles sprang up immediately, yet till the ravage made by the Deluge the Earth was not universally steriliz'd. This Opinion seems highly probable upon several accounts; amongst the rest, upon this, of the prodigious Wickedness which 'twixt the Creation and the Deluge over-ran the face of the Earth. We have a very heavy account of this matter in the 6th of *Genesis*; there we are told, that God saw that the Wickedness of Man was great in the Earth; and that every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only evil continually; so that it repented the Lord that he had made Man, and it grieved him at the Heart. We are told farther, that the Earth was corrupt before God, and filled with Violence; that all Flesh had corrupted his way upon the Earth. Which great Wickedness can be attributed to nothing else but the prodigious Fruitfulness of primitive Earth; which tho' fit for Man in his Innocence, prov'd a decoy and snare to him after he was fallen; serv'd to the exciting of his Lusts, and to the ministration of plentiful Fuel to his Vices and Luxury; and whereas little Labour was requir'd

Woodward's
Essay,
Part 2.

Gen. vi. 6, 7.

Ver. 11, 12.

Woodward's
Essay, p. 95.

requir'd in order to the procuring of the LET. 5.
 Product of the too bountiful Earth, the
 more time Men had to prosecute their
 Wickedness; to lay out in Folly and Sin,
 and to devote to all manner of sensual
 Corruption. Hence it was that Intem-
 perance and Debauchery, Unchastity,
 Lasciviousness, nay Beastiality so much
 abounded; and that the Generations be-
 fore the Flood minded nothing so much
 as the gratification of their carnal Appe-
 tites; or, as our Lord with all decent
 reserve expresses it, *Eating and Drinking,*
Marrying and giving in Marriage. And as
 these were the sad effects of the too great
 affluence of the primitive Earth, there-
 fore it was for the spiritual good of Man-
 kind that God design'd to remove this
 pernicious Bait; that he entail'd a Curse
 upon the paradisaical Earth at first, which
 took effect in part then, and more at the
 universal Deluge, in order to remove out
 of the way those baits to Wickedness which
 at first were too abundantly afforded;
 and to keep Men so employ'd in bringing
 the steriliz'd Earth to produce them Food
 as would leave 'em far less time to devote
 and sacrifice to the ways of Death and
 Destruction. Thus is this Curse, which
 God denounc'd upon the Ground, ac-
 counted for; it was inflicted with an in-
 finitely

LET. 5. finitely good and gracious design, in order to keep Men from Sin, by removing most of those Materials out of the way which, tho' fit for Man in his Innocence, were by no means calculated for him in his deprav'd Condition, and by necessitating a great part of that time to be taken up in preparing Materials for self-preservation; which otherwise lay upon Mens hands, and was but too naturally employ'd to pernicious purposes. This is the second Difficulty sufficiently remov'd.

The last Difficulty is, How it could consist with the infinite Wisdom of God to create a World in such beautiful Circumstances as this was in its paradisaical condition, when he foresaw at the same time that it would not be long ere it must be turn'd into a place of Barrenness and disorderly Confusion. 'Tis thought very hard to imagin that God should destroy the Work of his Hands almost as soon as he had finish'd it; that all things should be unhing'd again by such time as they were well rang'd and put in order; and that the Fragrancy and lovely Verdure with which all things appear'd at first, should no sooner make its shew, but be nipp'd in the bud, and blasted all on a sudden;

sudden: Some People can't bear to see LET. 3.
 that in so short a time all things should be
 inverted, and put into a total disorder; V. Burnet's
 Archaeolog.
 l. 2. c. 7.
 & O. R.
 p. 48.
 that the whole Nature which had but just
 now been compos'd and polish'd should, be-
 fore the first time of the Sun's setting, fall
 to ruin and confusion; that in the Morn-
 ing God should say, all things were good;
 and yet in the Evening of the same Day,
 all things should be accursed! These things
 are look'd upon by some as very strange;
 they can't imagin how it could consist
 with the infinite Wisdom of God, to
 take so much pains in making that World
 most nicely elaborate which he knew in
 a very little time he should have occasion
 almost totally to unbinge again, and to
 bring it almost back into that originary
 state of Confusion in which it appear'd in
 its Chaotic condition; to make it exquisite-
 ly fine for a few Moments, that it might
 be the more capable, after those Mo-
 ments were expir'd, of falling from the
 highest pitch of material sensible Beauty,
 into a Scene of disorderly Confusion and
 wild Deformity.

Whereas if we admit what the inge-
 nious Dr. Woodward contends for to be
 true; That the Curse of the Ground took
 not full effect till the universal Deluge,
 then this Difficulty is remov'd; the

L

World

LET. 5. World being not, as is suppos'd in the
 ~~~~~ Objection, spoil'd as soon as it was made;  
 but it continu'd a many hundreds of  
 Years in its first Dress, charmingly Beau-  
 tiful, before it felt the effects of the Curse  
 which was denounc'd against it at the  
*Fall of Adam*, and fell from its first Glory  
 into its present Desolation. If this *Hypothesis*  
 is true, then the short time is re-  
 mov'd wherein some People are so  
 loath to see all things run out of Har-  
 mony and dazzling Splendor and Beauty,  
 into Disorder and wild Confusion: Then  
 there is no such thing as one of the Ma-  
 ster-pieces of the Hands of Heaven quite  
 spoil'd and utterly degenerated before the  
 first Sun-setting; but as God pronounc'd  
 all well in the Morning, it continu'd so,  
 with relation to the Frame and Texture  
 of the Material World, to, and in the  
 Evening; and not only so, but for many  
 thousands of Mornings and Evenings af-  
 ter. Thus, I say, is this Difficulty re-  
 mov'd, supposing what Dr. Woodward  
 contends for to be true. That the Curse of  
 the Ground took not such effect as to de-  
 stroy Nature's originary Beauty till the  
 fatal ravage made by *Noah's Flood* upon  
 the face of the Earth: And that this *Hypothesis*  
 may be true, I confess its Author  
 has made appear very plausibly. Indeed



it seems to have a great deal of reason on its side; nothing giving so good an account of that prodigious Wickedness which spread it self far and wide in the *Amediluvian* World as a Paradisaical Earth, luxuriantly producing all things requisite for the Necessity and Delight of Mankind: Hence would commence Laziness and Ease, and these glutted with Plenty; we know can't fail to produce the height of Sensuality, which is as productive of vicious Exorbitances of all other kinds, as Plenty, and Idleness, and Ease, are of it. But I need not proceed to a vindication of this Hypothesis advanced by Dr. Woodward; it may be met with accurately done in him; to whom therefore I must refer you if you would see what may be, and is, said in favour of this Doctrine.

But tho' this Notion be not admitted, but the immediate influence of the Curse which God pronounc'd upon the Ground be taken for granted; still I am of opinion that the destruction of Nature e'er it had well seen half a Day, or at farthest many Days, in its originary beautiful condition, is perfectly consistent, tho' it was foreknown before created, with the infinite Wisdom of God. For it must be consider'd that at least this whole inferior

LET. 5.

World was made for the service of Man: This is imply'd demonstratively in the dominion God invested him in when he came into Being: Man therefore being the end of its creation, consequently it is perfectly consonant to infinite Wisdom that it continue, or be put into such Circumstances wherein it may be of most service to him for whom it was created: If Man therefore deviate from his first state, so that it be requisite, in order to its being capable of doing him most service, that the World alter its condition, consequently here is a reason which will justify infinite Wisdom in such an alteration: Whereas the case was thus, and so God's infinite Wisdom is sufficiently clear'd. For 'tis certain that Man did Fall, and tho' the primitive World in its first glorious condition was best suited to him at his first creation, and as long as his Innocence continu'd, and his Reason had a due command over his sensitive Part; yet upon this *Fall*, as it would do him most good if alter'd, accordingly it was, consistently with God's infinite Wisdom, chang'd. It was calculated for innocent Man in its first glorious appearance out of nothing, the most charming Objects of Sense being to be trusted with Man when his inferiour Faculties were absolutely

at



at the command of his Reason; whereas **LEL. 5.**  
 after his *Fall* it would do him no good,   
 but mischief, in its originary condition,  
 its first Luxuriancy being likely to be no-  
 thing else but an irresistible Bait to his  
 new predominant Sensuality, upon which  
 score it was alter'd: And its first creation  
 being for the service of Man, consequent-  
 ly its alteration, when requisite to that  
 purpose, is justifiable in infinite Wisdom.  
 Thus have I answer'd what is excepted  
 against my fourth Head. Having no more  
 now to add, but that I am,

**S I R,**

*Yours, &c.*

**L 3**

**LETTER**

## LETTER VI

SIR!

I Have now run through four of the five Classes of Difficulties charg'd upon the *Mosaic History of the Fall of Adam* under those five Heads into which I divided it in my first upon this Subject; And I think I have sufficiently answer'd such Exceptions as are made against the Place and Furniture of that Place where the Scene of the Fall was laid; against the Law given to Adam for tryal of his Obedience, and the Penalty by which that Law was enforc'd; against the Instrument which the Devil made use of in his attempt to seduce our first Parents, and the immediate strange consequences which attended their Disobedience; and against that part of the account wherein the Punishments inflicted upon the Offenders are recorded. What has been objected under these Heads, I say, I think I have sufficiently answer'd, and therein reasserted Moses's right to an Historical Construction in these Particulars. It remains only that I do the same by the last; that is, *The account of the Cloathing of the first Man and Woman, and their expulsion out of the Garden; and the placing*



placing a guard of Angels in the entrance into that happy place, to keep 'em from attempting upon the Tree of Life after they had forfeited it, and were expell'd out of Paradise. And this, I believe, a few words will effect. The account of this matter in Moser's History is this: Unto Adam also and unto his Wife did the Lord God make Coats of Shins, and cloathed them: And the Lord God said, Behold the Man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: And now lest he put forth his Hand and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden to Till the Ground from whence he was taken: So he drove out the Man; and he plac'd at the East of the Garden of Eden Cherubims and a Flaming Sword, which turn'd every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life. The only material considerable Difficulty in which account is this: What is meant by that guard of Angels with Flaming Swords set as Centinels to guard the Gates of Paradise, and watch the Tree of Life? And this, I believe, may be satisfactorily clear'd in a few words; and so the vindication of the vulgar Exposition of the Mosaic History of the Fall of Adam will be compleated.

Gen. iii. 21;  
22, 23, 24;

N. Bishop  
Patrick on  
Gen. iii.  
p. 23

N. Archb.  
John Ten  
in the  
p. 23.

LET. 6. For 'tis well known that what is here  
 render'd *Flaming Sword* may signifie a  
*dividing Flame*, or a *Flame of division* ;  
 and then the Construction is, that God  
 order'd a Trench of Fire to be cast about  
 the Garden out of which *Adam* was turn'd,  
 to keep him from a re-entrance into that  
 forfeited Mansion ; which he might at-  
 tempt to do with a vain expectation of  
 reversing the Sentence of Death, which  
 he was brought under by his Disobedi-  
 ence, by taking of the Fruit of the Tree  
 of Life. This Trench of Fire might con-  
 tinue till the destruction of *Paradise*, the  
 removal of the two Trees, and the redu-  
 ction of that once lovely Place, to a like  
 Constitution with the other Parts of the  
 World. Others understand by the *Fla-  
 ming Sword*, an Angel ; so the *Jews* :  
 And upon this Supposition Bishop *Patrick*  
 thus interprets it ; That the Lord plac'd  
*Cherubims* and one of the *Seraphims*, or a  
 Flaming Angel in the form of a Flying  
 Fiery *Seraph*, whose Body moving in the  
 Air resembl'd the vibrations of a Sword,  
 to guard the entrance into the Garden :  
 And Archbishop *Tennison* before him thus ;  
 After *Adam* was driven out of *Paradise*,  
 the *Logos* appointed a kind of *Schechinah*,  
 in the appearance of Angels, to guard  
 the way of the Tree of Life : These, I  
 conceive,

V. Nicholls's  
Conference  
Part 1.

V. Bishop  
*Patrick* on  
Gen. iii.  
p. 83.

V. Archbi-  
shop *Ten-  
nison* on I-  
dolatry,  
p. 322.



conceive, were a *Cherub* and a *Seraph*; LET. 6. and that the latter (an Angel in the opinion of *Maimonides* himself) was meant by the *Flaming Sword* turning every way; the versatil tail of a *Seraph*, or Flame-like winged Serpent, not being unaptly so call'd. I think either of these Interpretations rescue this Particular from being liable to any real Exception: For whereas 'tis thought ridiculous by some, that an Angel should be plac'd as Centinel at the entrance of the Garden brandishing a great two-handed shining Sword, wherewith to guard the only place by which *Adam* and *Eve* might storm *Paradise*, and carry off of the Fruit of the Tree of Life; if nothing else is meant here but a *Flame of division*, or a *Trench of Fire*, this Difficulty vanishes; or if by the *Flaming Sword* is meant a *Shining Seraph*, it is hence very well remov'd. How long it was e're *Paradise* was reduc'd to a like condition with the rest of the Earth; e're the two Trees were remov'd, and the Centinels discharg'd, or the Trench of Fire extinguish'd, *Moses* does not say. Whence we may conclude, that it was no way material for us to know: We may believe it was not long e're it was done, because we hear nothing, either here, or  
else.

LET. 6. elsewhere, of the continuance of the thing.

Some People are pleas'd to make some trifling remarks upon the Conduct of Almighty God in the cloathing of our first Parents; trifling, I say, as of no force; but such as can scarce, tho' never so briefly, be answer'd without being guilty of Impertinence; which therefore I can't think worth a formal Stating and solemn Answer. I shall take notice of 'em in a word; and give Answers less elaborate, according to their merit. 'Tis made a Difficulty how God can be suppos'd engag'd in such butcherly actions as the killing and slaying of Beasts; whereas to make this Question is profane: If he thinks good to do it, his so doing not only sets above exception, but sanctifies every indifferent action. Neither need it be suppos'd that Almighty God was immediately or personally concern'd in this action; he might do that by his Angels which is by a common and allow'd way of Speech attributed to himself. Indeed it might, for any thing *Moses* says, have been done by *Adam*; and be said to have been done by God, as it was what he immediately directed and order'd. 'Tis ask'd farther, Whether one or more Species



Species of Animals were not entirely lost LET. 6.  
upon this account? As but two of each  
kind were created, if two Males or Fe-  
males were first slay'd, then two Species  
were destroy'd; if a Male and a Female,  
then at least one kind of living Creatures  
went to ruin; whereas, I pray, where  
is the absurdity, suppose God thought  
this fit? Was it not lawful for him to do  
what he would with his own? Besides  
that, this doughty Difficulty is founded  
upon a Supposition which, I think, can't  
so easily be prov'd as taken for granted,  
that only two of each Species of Animals  
were at first created. This *Moses* does  
not tell us, nor any body else that I  
know of; neither can it with the least  
shadow of reason be *a pari* concluded from  
the case of Man. For God's beginning  
the Race of Mankind with only one Male  
and Female he had very great reasons;  
all those moral and political ends which  
would be serv'd by their considering that  
they were all Branches of the same Stock;  
and principally this Conduct had an eye  
upon the universal good of Man; suppo-  
sing any such thing as a miscarriage in  
*Adam*; supposing a breach of the first,  
that all succeeding Generations which  
should issue out of their Loins might be  
con-

LET. 6. concluded in *Adam* and *Eve* under a second Covenant; which could not to so good effect have been done had God at first made more Pairs than one, as one Pair might have escap'd tho' another had fallen, which would have lessen'd the extent of the Covenant of Grace, and in process of time have brought, according to the extent or efficacy of the first Obedience or Sin in different Persons, into the moral state of the World, all imaginable Confusion: As it is not therefore said, nor can be otherwise concluded, that only two Animals of each Species were at first created, therefore what is suppos'd in the Objection is precarious, and the Objection it self falls. 'Tis ask'd, in the last place, What became of those Beasts whose Skins were first taken for the cloathing of *Adam* and *Eve*? And an answer may be given, without any prejudice to the Historical Construction of the *Mosaic account of the Fall of Adam*, that we can't tell: *Moses* is silent in the case; and none of the sacred Writers who came after him take any notice of this thing, and therefore we must declare that we know nothing certain of the matter. If we may be allow'd to guess, they might be made use of for a Sacrifice; even for that

whereby



whereby God first settl'd that Institution: LET. 6.

We have all the reason in the world to attribute the original of sacrificing to God Almighty; 'tis otherwise unaccountable to me how such a way of Worship should take so as this did in the first Ages of the World; indeed, how it should come into the World at all; for I think its being a branch of Divine Worship is far from being a deduction of Natural Religion: Or if some Men should argue themselves into this way, 'tis unaccountable that their custom should be universally comply'd with, if they had no better foundation for it than their own private arbitrary practice. If it was therefore instituted by God, these Beasts might be made use of in its first Institution. But here as we can only guess, and as it is a thing which no way affects the *Mosaic* History whatever became of the Carcasses of those Brute Creatures which first laid down their Lives for Man's service, it is what you will not easily pardon to enlarge on a point which has no direct reference to our present business.

And now I have answer'd all the considerable Difficulties I have met with charg'd by light Men upon the Historical Construction of the *Mosaic* account of

LET. 6. of the *Fall of Adam*; and shewn 'em all  
 to be invalid; by much not so strong  
 as whereon to found a *Parabolic*, *My-*  
*thological*, *Hieroglyphical*; or otherwise  
*Fantastical* and *Chimerical* Construction  
 of this famous Narration. I shall there-  
 fore give up this Subject, taking it for  
 granted that *Moses*, in the *Fall*, in the  
 strictest Reason, may and ought to be  
 Historically constru'd: Which was the  
 thing I undertook to shew, notwithstan-  
 ding those so much cry'd up Difficulties,  
 seeming in the eyes of some Men to at-  
 tend such a Construction. I shall now  
 only give you a Paraphrase of, and some  
 incidental Remarks upon, this History,  
 as it is deliver'd in the 2d and 3d of *Ge-*  
*nesis*, and then I think I shall have suf-  
 ficiently answer'd your desire as to these  
 Particulars:

History whatever became of the Car-  
 is of those Brute Creatures which first  
 laid down their Lives for Man's service,  
 it is what you will not easily pardon to  
 enlarge on a point which has no direct  
 reference to our present business.

And now I have answer'd all the con-  
 siderable Difficulties I have met with  
 charg'd by right Men upon the Histo-  
 rical Construction of the Mosaic account



PARAPH. and REMARKS. *Genesis the 2d.*

1. Thus have I given you a brief account of the method prosecuted by God Almighty in the creation and forming of the whole visible World.

*1. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.*

REMARK.

I observ'd formerly that the first of *Genesis* is a summary account of the Creation of the World. In this Chapter we meet with some enlargements in a few Particulars; which I shall now take in, tho' they have no direct reference to the *Fall of Adam*; that the whole lose not its connection, but that the Series of the three first Chapters of *Genesis* be kept entire. If I meet with any Difficulties in that part of this Chapter relating to the Creation, I shall take notice of 'em by the way: That nothing be wanting, as far as I go, to render *Moses*, in the beginning of the Book of *Genesis*, a fair and plain Historian.

2. Which great Work was brought about in the space of six Days; so that on the seventh God had concluded his Work, which he set about in calling out of No-  
*2. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day*  
 thing

thing, and which he completed in bringing to Perfection each branch of, the visible Creation. *from all his work which he had made.*

3. In consideration of which conclusion of his Work and subsequent Rest, he sanctify'd the seventh Day, the Day of his Rest; and set it apart as a Day of Rest and Worship for Men: That the Memory of his first Rest, and the six Days Creation, might continue to be duly and gratefully observ'd to all Generations. *3. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctify'd it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*

#### R E M A R K.

In what the Sanctification of the seventh Day consisted *Moses* does not tell us in this concise History; in all probability, it was a setting it apart for religious Worship, and that more solemn than what was to be daily perform'd; to which, rest from daily Labour would be requir'd; which would not be without its end, as it would be a constant and standing remembrancer of the first Rest of God; and thereby of the Creation, which God might hereby secure from being eras'd out of the memory of Man. I have ventur'd to proceed upon this Supposition in the Paraphrase; being sensible of no other way by which a portion of time can be sanctify'd, or set apart



apart to God so properly, as when his Creatures are then to lay other things aside, and to spend it more immediately in his service. I won't contend that this Rest or *Sabbath* was so strictly observ'd in the first Times as under the *Jewish* Dispensation: Indeed so great silence in the matter seems to demonstrate that it was not. However, in all probability, it was kept at first in some measure; greater strictness being ordain'd when it was to be a Memorial of the Slavery the *Jews* were deliver'd from when God Almighty brought 'em out of the *Land of Egypt*, out of the *House of Bondage*: Their Slavery there was constant and without intermission; in remembrance of which, and of their delivery from it, they were to devote the *Sabbath* to absolute rest.

4. This, I say, is an exact account of the process of Almighty God in the formation of the Heavens and of the Earth; when he brought 'em out of that *Chaos* which he had before commanded out of Nothing, into their present condition.

5. And when he furnish'd the Earth with his own hand with the whole Vegetable Kingdom; which sprang not up spontaneously at first, nei-

4. These are the generations of the heavens and the earth, when they were created; in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

5. And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field be-

ther was it beholding to ~~fore it grew: For~~  
 Rain, or the Art of Man, ~~the Lord God had~~  
 for its production, or first ~~not caused it to~~  
 appearance in Being; ~~rain upon the earth;~~  
~~and there was not~~  
~~a man to till the~~  
~~ground.~~

6. But a certain Steam ~~6. But there went~~  
 proceeding from, and retur- ~~up a mist from the~~  
 ning to, the Earth, so pre- ~~earth, and water'd~~  
 par'd the superficial Slime, ~~the whole face of~~  
 impregnated by God with ~~the ground.~~  
 the first *Stamina Vita*, or ~~the first~~  
 Principles of the Vegetables, as to make them  
 display themselves, in a most amazing variety,  
 far and wide upon the face of the Earth.

## R E M A R K.

I don't know how you will approve of the Pa-  
 raphrase I have given of these two last Verses:  
 They are in themselves, by reason of their con-  
 ciseness, something obscure; but I think the  
 sense I have given of 'em bids tolerably fair for  
 their genuin Construction. It is evidently the  
 design of the former part of the 5th Verse, to in-  
 timate, that the Vegetable Kingdom did not at  
 first grow *spontaneously*, but was created by God;  
 and the latter part of it, I think, can't better be  
 render'd, if we will so construe it as to make the  
 6th Verse intelligible, than by saying, that nei-  
 ther were they beholding for their first Being to  
 Rain,



Rain, or the care of Man. Which Words being thus taken, it follows that a Mist impregnated the Earth; and brought the Plants and Herbs, out of the Principles which God had made, first into Being. Or if, according to a great Man, the latter part of the 5th Verse be taken as including two reasons *V. Bishop Patrick in Locum.* why the Vegetables are not to be conceiv'd, as at first, spontaneously produc'd, possibly this Paraphrase may bid fairest for the truth upon that Supposition. Verse 5. *And when he had made the first Principles of the Vegetables, which sprang not spontaneously of themselves, for they had no Rain, which must be requisite (if there be any such thing) to their spontaneous Generation, nor a Man to macerate the Ground; both which are thought, in an especial manner, requisite to their equivocal Production.* Verse 6. *But a Mist moisten'd the Ground, which, tho' not sufficient to produce 'em spontaneously, brought 'em out of the seminal Principles which God had before made.* Either of these Paraphrases give an intelligible account of these Verses: Let which of 'em you like best, or a better, if you can find one, have your preference.

7. And when he formed Man; part of him, to wit, God formed man his Body, out of the Earth; of the dust of and infus'd into him that the ground; and  
M 2 Breath

Breath of Life which became *breath'd into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.*

## R E M A R K.

Thus far, save in the 2d and 3d Verses, Moses proceeds by way of recapitulation: What follows is by re-assumption; and enlargement upon some Particulars, which he might think too concisely treated of at first; or pass'd by, and yet worth mentioning.

8. And Man God put in a delicious Garden; which he had prepared for him Eastward, in the Country of Eden: *8. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had form'd.*

9. Which he had furnish'd with all things requisite either for service or satisfaction; more especially there were two Trees in the midst of this Garden more notable than the rest; the Tree whose Fruit had the power of repairing decay'd Nature; and that by which God was to try whether Adam would be good, or bad. *9. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food: the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.*

10. This



10. This Country and Garden were situate upon a River; which during its stay in 'em continu'd one, but afterwards was divided into four Branches; two before it fell into, and two after it left the Country of *Eden*.

11. The branch nighest to this place is the Western of the two in which the *Tygris* and *Euphrates* fall into the *Persian Gulf*; which borders upon that part of *Arabia* where *Havilah*, the Son of *Cush*, settl'd: A Country rich in Gold.

12. Which Gold is exceeding good: This Country also abounds with Precious Stones, &c.

13. The other nigher branch is the Eastern of the two Channels by which the great River is discharg'd; which runneth along by the Land of *Cush*.

10. And a river went out of *Eden* to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

11. The name of the first is *Pison*, that is it which compasseth the whole land of *Havilah*, where there is gold.

12. And the gold of that land is good; There is *Bdellium*, and the *Onyx-stone*.

13. And the name of the second river is *Gihon*, the same is it which compasseth the whole land of *Ethiopia*.

14. The other two branches are the *Tygris* bordering upon *Affyria*, and the *Euphrates*; before they meet and make that great River upon which *Paradise* was situated. And the name of the third river is *Hiddekel*, that is it which goeth toward the east of *Affyria*: And the fourth river is *Euphrates*.

## R E M A R K.

In paraphrasing the *Mosaic* account of the Description of *Paradise*, I have ventur'd to fix the four Branches of the River of *Eden*; making 'em the *Tygris* and *Euphrates* before they meet, and the two Branches by which the great River discharges it self into the *Persian Gulf*; tho' I can't say that it is really certain that these are the four Branches specify'd by *Moses*. That the *Tygris* and *Euphrates* are two, is unquestionable; and that the Branches specify'd here are the other two, I think, the learned *Huetius* has render'd it more than probable. However, if you are more inclinable to *Sir Walter Raleigh's* opinion, 'tis what I leave you absolutely at liberty to adhere to. In paraphrasing these Words, I look upon it as necessary to determin the *Pison* and *Gihon* in *Moses* to some known Branches; and those which I believe they have most right to be thought I have here made 'em; not that I would therefore

be



be thought to be absolutely positive that these were certainly they. Neither, if we do not know them, is it any real prejudice to this part of the History; we know that the *Tygris* and *Euphrates* are two of the Branches of the River of *Paradise*; and if those nam'd are not the other two, they must be some of the more inland Branches of the great River; which tho' they be now unknown, yet we can determin nigh enough the place where *Paradise* stood from hence, that it was of necessity somewhere 'twixt the meeting of the two Rivers nigh *Babylon*, and their separating again not far from *Aracca* before they fall into the *Persian* Sea. To determin this nigh is enough to answer the foremention'd Objection, as I have shewn already, and what I have said heretofore needs not be repeated. The design of this Remark is only to avoid misunderstanding; for in fixing the *Pison* and *Gihon*, I do it only upon probable terms, as I thought it convenient to put something in the Paraphrase to answer to these names. As to the old conceit, that the *Nilus* and *Ganges* are the *Pison* and *Gihon* of *Moses*, 'tis so well shewn to be extravagant by several learned Men, that 'tis a wonder (were not the power of prejudice known to have a strange influence) that any should at this time of day be found to patronize and defend it.

15. In this Garden God 15. And the Lord  
put the Man whom he had made,

made, and order'd him to dress and cultivate it. *and put him into the garden of Eden; to dress it, and to keep it.*

16. And to eat of the Fruit of all the Trees which grew in it, *16. And the Lord commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.*

17. Save one, that of the knowledge of good and evil; from which, if he did not abstain, Death was entail'd upon his acting contrary to the Commandment of God. *17. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

#### R E M A R K,

The reasonableness of this Law, nay and its fitness and conveniency in order to the end propos'd to be answer'd by it, I have shewn, tho' briefly, yet I think perspicuously, in its proper place; and I have defended the Penalty by which it was enforc'd. I have shewn also, in short, the Goodness of God, in permitting its Consequences in *Adam* to have a moral evil effect upon all his Posterity: And I have demonstratively vindicated the Goodness of God in creating the World notwithstanding his foreknowledge of the



the *Fall* of Man. So that I have nothing to add here by way of Remark, unless it be to remove an Objection which may be made against God's Conduct in permitting the universal spreading of Original Sin; that he does not act in this consonantly to his dealings with other Classes of his Creatures; that the probation of the Angels was not put upon one for all, so that if one fell all the rest would be evilly affected by his miscarriage, but that each stood upon his own bottom, and far'd well or ill according to his own Obedience or Misdoing. Whereas in answer to this it may be consider'd, that the Circumstances the two different Classes of Men and Angels were made in, justify his different Conduct in the case before us. The Angels were all made at a time, and therefore capable of being at the same time try'd by God each in his own Person; whereas Man being to come into the World by degrees, and successively by the method of Generation, upon this account other measures were more conveniently taken with him, and the issue in the tryal of Obedience was put upon one, whose Conduct should influence all, that Confusion, supposing a *Fall* might be avoided, and that in concluding all under Sin, Mercy might be capable of being extended unto, and had upon all.

18. And God saw it necessary that Man should not be alone: And accordingly

18. And the Lord God said it is not good that the man be

he provided a Help-meet for him.

19. Now he had form'd already out of the superficial Earth and Waters all the Branches of the Terrestrial Animal Kingdoms, and brought them to Adam in order to receive their Names, which accordingly Adam gave 'em; and according to his good pleasure they were denominated.

20. But while he gave Names to all the Branches of the Animal Kingdom, amongst them all there was not a Help found fit either for his Society, or the Multiplication of his Kind.

*should be alone: I will make him an help-meet for him.*

19. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field; and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20. And Adam gave names to all cattel; and to the fowl of the air; and to every beast of the field: But for Adam there was not found an help-meet for him.

#### R E M A R K.

In the ninth Letter which you had from me upon the Mosaic History of the Creation of the World, you may remember I contend for Adam's having his first Language given him immediately by



by God Almighty; and that, among other reasons, upon this account, that otherwise 'tis impossible that *Adam* should give Names on the sixth Day to Brute Animals; which yet I there shew he as certainly did as *Eve* was then created. I may here farther add, That 'tis impossible, upon supposition that he had his Language to frame, that he should be capable of naming 'em for a long time after the sixth Day was concluded. Their Names no doubt were given agreeable to, and expressive of, their several Natures; as the late learned Bishop *Stillingfleet* observes; not that it is here suppos'd that the terms expressing each simple *Idea*, gave us the Nature of the things they stood for; that is impossible; for what relation is there 'twixt a Word and an Essence? 'Twixt a determinate Modification of Sound, and the Substratum of Substance? So that when we say that Words express the Natures and Essences of the things they signify, we must not be understood of Primitives, of such as express simple, but of such as express complex *Ideas*. Taking which for granted, that *Adam* gave Names to the Brute Animals consonant to the complex *Ideas* he had conceiv'd of 'em, (which must be suppos'd if we will imagin the first Language as compleat as the meanest of those which owe their birth to the *Babel Confusion*) 'tis evident that if he had his Language to frame, it must be a pretty long time e're this could be effected: For he had voluntary Denominations to  
give

give to simple *Ideas* as he receiv'd 'em; that is, he had a *Vocabulary* to make of abundance of primitive Words, which would take up some time; and he had that to do farther which must be the result of more time and considerable experience: To frame complex *Ideas*, which he would find necessary in order to the being able to think of things with the greater expediteness and ease; and to give Names to these new *Ideas* too, as they were of necessity to be made use of in denominating and expressing the complex *Ideas* which he had conceiv'd of all the parts of the Animal World, this certainly would have been a work of a considerable number of Days. Inasmuch therefore as within the compass of the sixth Day the naming of the Animals was finish'd; hence we must of necessity conclude that he who nam'd 'em had his Language immediately at the hands of God.

21. Therefore God cast *Adam* into a deep sleep; and took from him one of his Ribs; and closed up the Flesh instead thereof, in the place whence he took it.

21. And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon *Adam*; and he slept: And he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof.

22. And of that Rib, with other additional Matter, made he Woman; whom

22. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from when



when he had finish'd, he brought her unto Adam.

*man made be a woman; and brought her unto the man.*

22. Who, being given to understand whence she was taken, pronounc'd her Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh: And upon that account gave her the name of Woman.

23. And Adam said, *this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.*

24. In this is grounded the strict union 'twixt Man and Wife in Marriage; they return to what they were in the first Creation; one and the same Flesh.

24. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh.

25. And they were both naked; but their Affections were so regular, and their Passions so absolutely at the command of their Reason, that they found nothing upon account of which they needed to be asham'd of each other's Nakedness.

25. And they were both naked, the man and his wife; and were not asham'd.

REMARK.

## R E M A R K.

The Rib out of which God made Woman some are pleas'd to cavil at; looking upon it as a very odd piece of Matter out of which to make so charming a Creature; whereas, tho' it be otherwise with Man, *ex quovis ligno fit Mercurius* in the hands of God: Whatever Matter he pitch'd upon, he can reduce it, if he so thinks fit, from what is least so to the most beautiful thing in the whole Creation. The reason given in the 24th Verse justifies God's choosing it; and as it would not suffice alone, God no doubt added some foreign Matter to it to make up what was wanting. As to *Adam's* being look'd upon by some either as a Monster before, or a Cripple after this Rib was taken; 'tis a very idle conceit, insisted upon by none but such as rake up all things in *Moses* wherein he may, tho' never so poorly, be cavill'd at.

PARAPH.



PARAPHRASE and REMARKS.

Genesis the 3d.

1. Now the Seraph was the fittest Instrument the Devil could make use of in the temptation of Eve, of all the Beasts of the Field: Whom accordingly he pitch'd upon; and in him ask'd her, whether or no it were true that God had forbid them to eat of the Fruit of the Trees in the Garden.

2, 3. And the Woman answer'd, that God indeed had permitted 'em to eat of the Fruit of all the Trees in the Garden save one; but of that one which also grew in the middle of the Garden they were not to taste; neither to touch it; but that Death should be the wages of an offence in either of these respects.

4, 5. To which the Devil in the Serpent reply'd, That 'twas impossible that they should die; and that

1. Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made: And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2. And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die.

they

they had utterly misapprehended God Almighty in the case ; for that did they taste of the Fruit of that Tree it would be so far from killing 'em as to increase their present knowledge ; and thereby to bring 'em nigher than they were made to the image of God.

5. For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be open'd, and ye shall be as Gods ; knowing good and evil.

### R E M A R K.

Taking it for granted that, *yea, bath God said, &c.* is not the beginning of the intercourse 'twixt *Eve* and the *Devil* ; I look

Com. on Gen. iii.  
pag. 62.

upon what my Lord of *Ely* offers upon this occasion to be very highly reasonable ; that he might begin his Discourse with a representation of himself as a Courtier of Heaven, who came to congratulate *Adam* and *Eve* the Happiness that had been of late so bountifully conferr'd upon 'em by God ; which he was sensible was so great, that he could not be perswaded that they were deny'd any of the Fruit of the Garden, unless he heard it from their own Mouth ; which therefore he asks, after some introductory Discourse, with a *yea, bath God said, &c.* Or these Words may well enough be taken as the first which pass'd in this famous intercourse. For, no doubt, as the *Devil* appear'd in the Body of a *Seraph*, *Eve* took him for an Angel, and therefore



therefore he had no need to tell her that he was such. And as she took him for a Courtier of Heaven, she might believe he knew or had heard of their being forbidden the Fruit of one Tree in the Garden. Which things being presuppos'd, the Words in this History might very fairly be the first in this Discourse: *Yea, hath God said; or, Is it true what I have heard, that God hath deny'd you the use of the Fruit of a certain Tree in the Garden?* Either of these Interpretations may be fix'd upon the Words; and I think the Paraphrase I have given of 'em will hold, whether we suppose 'em to begin or continue the Inter-course twixt Eve and the Devil.

6. These Arguments, together with the lovely appearance of the Fruit, prevail'd with the Woman to take of it and eat; and when she had tasted it, she carry'd of it to her Husband, and prevail'd with him to eat also. *6. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.*

R E M A R K.

In this Verse we see the Woman was guilty of the lust of the Flesh, the lust of the Eye, and the

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pride

pride of Life: When she saw the outward lovely appearance of the Fruit, she lusted after it in the first Sense; she shew'd her Covetousness, in being unwilling to be debarr'd from any thing in the Garden; and inasmuch as she was tempted upon this farther consideration to eat it, that did she so, it would make her as God, this was a demonstration of the Pride of her Heart, in aspiring to be more than God had made her; even to be as God: Which was certainly the most unparallell'd piece of Presumption, as well as Folly and Manity, that ever was in the World.

7. And when they had eaten of the forbidden Fruit they soon saw their Folly; their Eyes were open'd in another sense than that which the Devil pretended; for they found their sensual had got the mastery over their rational Faculties; and that they could not continue naked without being sham'd of the irregular consequences of their Nakedness; which put them upon applying Fig-tree-branches to their Bodies in order to cover it.

8. And toward the Evening of the Day on which they fell, they heard a terrible noise of the Schechinah of God approaching them in the cool of the day; the

7. And the eyes of them both were open'd: And they knew that they were naked: And they sew'd fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day; the



the Garden : At which being affrighted, and withal conscious of their guilt, they hid themselves in the Thickets, to avoid that God whom they were sensible they had lately grievously offended.

REMARK

Here it is ask'd by some, if Adam and Eve were so wise immediately after their creation, as is generally suppos'd, How they came to be guilty of so foolish an attempt as to endeavour to hide themselves from the presence of God? which any who has the least share of sense about him can't but look upon as an impossible thing. Whereas, in answer to this, it must be consider'd, that this was done in an extraordinary fright, which we know, for the time being, deprives the wisest Men of their Reason: But then certainly it is a most unreasonable thing to make inferences of their Capacities when they are masters of themselves, from what they do as it were mechanically, when the violence of their Passion hurries them beyond Thought, or Reasoning.

9. And the Lord called Adam out of the Thickets ; God called unto asking him where he was, Adam ; and said and how he came to hide unto him, where himself.

10. Who answer'd, that the terrible Voice of the *Schechinah* had affrighted him; especially his finding himself uneasy at his Nakedness with which he was created, made him hide himself.

10. And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden; and I was afraid because I was naked: And I hid myself.

11. And God said, How camest thou to be sensible of, and uneasy at, thy original Nakedness? Hast thou eaten of the forbidden Fruit, and thereby enslav'd thy superior to thy inferior Faculties?

11. And he said, who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?

#### R E M A R K.

The Expressions in these Verses, of God's asking *Adam*, Where he was? How he came to know of his Nakedness? Whether or no he had eaten of the Fruit of the forbidden Tree? are spoken *ἀνθρωποπαθῶς*; not supposing any ignorance of the matters in God; but representing him in his converse with Man, adapting his manner of Expression to the Infirmities and natural Capacity of the Party he speaks to. These manner of Expressions are to be met with on very many occasions in holy Writ: Upon some, when it would be difficult for Almighty God to express himself intelligibly to us weak Mortals any other way; as when he says that he Sees us, Hears us,



is Griev'd at us, or the like; none of which he can be, or do, strictly speaking, in such a manner as we understand them; and yet he is forc'd to express such actions of his as have the same effect, or answer the same ends as our Sight, Hearing, Grief, &c. by these names to make us in some measure apprehend him. Upon other occasions he speaks *ἀνθρώπου παθῶς*. where he might be understood were he pleas'd to express himself in another manner; as in the place before us; adapting himself to the Capacities, and as it were making himself a like Party to those he addresses; who would speak after this manner were they concern'd in these or such like matters.

12. Who answer'd that indeed the Woman whom he had lately given him, had prevail'd with him to take of the forbidden Fruit: And accordingly he did eat of it.

13. And God asked the Woman, how it came to pass that she had done this thing? To which she answer'd, that the Seraph had deluded her, and prevail'd with her to break his Commandment.

12. *And the man said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree; and I did eat.*

13. *And the Lord God said unto the woman, what is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

14. And God said unto the Devil in the Seraph, inasmuch as thou hast done this thing, thou art cursed above all Creatures; thou art farther degraded from thy first station, and shalt henceforth take delight in nothing but doing Mischief; a Food as unpalatable to all truly rational Minds, as Dust is to Sense.

15. And I will stir up an irreconcilable Feud 'twixt thee and the Woman; and between her Seed and thy accursed Legions: By the Seed of the Woman that Power which thou hast now got shall be destroyed; and in return, thou shalt only be able to tempt the Woman's Seed by Wiles and Stratagems; but shalt not be able, without their fault, to overcome.

REMARK. I here take for granted the truth of the first solution of the Curse of the Serpent, which you have in my 5th Letter upon this subject; That God speaks solely to the Devil who was possess'd of the Seraph; and from his calling him Serpent,

takes



takes occasion to express the Punishments he inflicts upon him for the Seduction of *Eve* by such natural Infirmities and Accidents as the common Serpent is liable and expos'd to: Not that I contend that this is the only unexceptionable Construction of these Particulars; both the Serpent and the Devil may be here meant, as I have shewn already, that God might in the strictest Justice charge with a form of Punishment even the Instrument which the Devil made use of in the Seduction of our first Parents. I have the rather pitch'd upon the former Interpretation here, not that I prefer it before the latter upon any account, but that in a Paraphrase it is capable of being express'd in fewer words; and that in it we have not the trouble to search out nicely what part of the Punishment belongs to the Devil, and what to the Serpent, properly so call'd.

The Second R E M A R K.

In the 15th Verse we have the first glimpse of that Covenant of Grace to which Almighty God condescended to admit Man after his Disobedience; which Covenant was struck with *Adam* here, tho' some of the Stipulations made in it were not accomplish'd till that *Fullness of Time*, when the Son of God took upon him our Nature, and paid down no less a Price than his most precious Blood as a Ransom for the Sins of the World. It is wonder'd upon this occasion by some, That Mankind, after Disobedience,

should be admitted to terms of Mercy and Reconciliation; whereas *the Angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own Habitation,*  
 Jude vi. *are reserv'd in everlasting Chains under*

*Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day:* And it may be wonder'd at by all, without our being able to give an account of it, and God's Goodness to us ward upon this score be everlastingly ador'd. Indeed the Mercy offer'd us in Christ, and the Method by which our Regeneration and Salvation are accomplish'd, are in all

respects wonderful; *εἰς ἃ ἐμβουθεῖν ἀγ- 1 Pet. i. 12. ἱκανοὶ ἄνθρωποι*, subjects not only too sublime for Men, but the brightest Angels, which they can't think of but they lose themselves in Speculations of the highest Flight and noblest Entertainment: And possibly this may be part of their Entertainment, to search out reasons why these Mercies were granted to us, but deny'd to those Beings which were once equal to themselves. Reasons, doubtless, God had for this, whose most arbitrary actions are of necessity the result of infinite Wisdom; of these they may discover many as they see much farther into abstract Matters than we can imagin; and as we, with all our shortsightedness are able, in my opinion, to assign some. That the spiritual Classes of Beings were not admitted to terms of Reconciliation and a second Covenant, might it not be in part because they sinn'd against the greatest Light; and without any Temptations  
 which



which their Perfection did not make 'em capable of easily resisting; and because they were liable to no other than purely spiritual Assaults? Whereas, might not Man have this favour granted, because being the *Nexus* of both the Material and Immaterial World, he was liable to Temptations both Spiritual and Sensual; and because, by reason of the wonderful close union 'twixt his two opposite Principles, he was so much the less able to resist either of the kinds as his superiour rational Faculties were weaken'd by being ty'd to, and plung'd in, Sense, and tinctur'd to their prejudice by sensitive Impressions? That is, might not he in this case have more Favour and Compassion shewn him than the brightest Angels, inasmuch as he sinn'd against much less Light; and assaulted with more and greater Temptations than they were, or could be, expos'd to? But these Particulars I offer only as Conjectures: When we have thought all we can upon the Conduct of Almighty God in that Work of Wonder, our Redemption, we must own that, in every part, it is an Object infinitely too bright for our weak Intellect; that *in it are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*; and we must cry out with the holy Apostle; *Oh! the depth of the riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!*

Col. ii. 3.

Rom. xi. 33.

16. The Punishment which God inflicted upon the Woman for her Disobedience was this, That she should bring forth Children in great Pain; and that she should be much more subject to her Husband in all respects now than she was design'd to be at her first creation.

17. And that inflicted upon Man for his complying with the Solicitations of the Woman, and eating of the Fruit of the Tree which was forbidden him, was this; That the Ground should be cursed for his sake; and that he should eat of the Fruit of it in Pain and Sorrow all the days of his life.

18. That it should now be most productive of Thorns and Thistles; and that his Diet in it should be the Herbs of the Field, instead of the rich Fruits of Paradise.

16. Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children, and thy desire shall be to thy husband; and he shall rule over thee.

17. And unto Adam he said, because thou hast hearken'd unto the voice of thy wife; and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.

18. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field.

19. That



19. That he should earn a sordid Livelihood in the Sweat of his Brow, till he return'd again to the Earth, out of which he was taken; and to which he was, after some time, by death, to return.

19. *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.*

## R E M A R K.

Were it my business at large to shew the excellency of this account of the Fall of Man in its Historical Construction, I might easily make it appear, as for other reasons, so principally in the several very momentous discoveries which are made in it; and which, had it not been writ, no other History in the World had been capable of supplying. It gives the best account in the World of the origin of moral Evil; that it came into the World by the abuse of Free-Will, and not by an Anti-God, or the Perversity of the first Man, as the most inquisitive Heathens, wanting the Light this History affords, were put upon supposing. The first of these Accounts is highly consonant to Reason; whereas both the latter, if impartially examin'd, labour with infinite Absurdities. And it accounts best for the first source of natural Evil too, that it is entail'd by Almighty God as a Punishment upon the introducers of moral Evil; whereas this and the former, with

the learned Heathens, had the same Fountain; with some, proceeding from an Anti-God; with others, from refractory Matter which they conceiv'd eternal, and incapable of being moulded by God to more advantage than it is at present. It gives the best account of the Sterility of the Earth, which we can never conceive to have come in its present Circumstances out of the Hands of God; but God may very rationally be suppos'd to have reduc'd it to this for the Punishment of fallen Man. And of the Infirmary and Pain in Childbirth of Women; whom, as bearing half in the continuation of Mankind, we can never suppose made at first in Circumstances so very disadvantageous in comparison of those of Man. At first, doubtless, the conditions of both Sexes were nigher an equality; but as Woman was first in the Transgression, hence we may rationally date the rise of her Degradation; of her being made absolutely subject to Man, whose originary Innocence she first assaulted; and of her bearing Children with Pain, a Punishment inflicted upon her, as being first in complying with the Temptations of Satan. These Particulars we are no other way inabl'd to give a rational account of, than from this excellent History; which render it the more to be valu'd as it is Historically constru'd. If you ask me why I make this so general a Remark here; I answer, Occasion was given from two of the four specify'd Particulars being contain'd in those Verses to which this Remark is annex'd,

20. And



20. And Adam gave his Wife the name of Eve, as she was to be the Mother of all Mankind; And to recover all from the Death which was incurred by the Fall, by that Messiah who should come of her Seed.

21. And God took the Skins of some Animals which he caus'd to be slain; and gave them to Adam and Eve for their Gloathing.

22. And he said, in a sarcastical manner, Behold the Man is become what he expected, even like one of us, to know good and evil! If we let him stay here he will be more like us still, by eating of the Fruit of the Tree of Life in order to live for ever!

23. To prevent which we must turn him out of Paradise into the wide World to Till the Ground, whence he had his original!

24. So he sent them out of Paradise; and he plac'd at the Eastern entrance of the

20. And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

21. Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them.

22. And the Lord God said, behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life; and eat, and live for ever:

23. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken

24. So he drove out the man; and he plac'd at the east Garden

Garden a *Cherub* and a *Seraph*, of the garden of E.  
 which by their terrible shi- *den Cherubims and*  
 ning appearance might de- *a flaming Sword;*  
 ter *Adam* or *Eve* from re-en- *which turn'd every*  
 tring into the Garden, and *way to keep the way*  
 taking of the Fruit of the *of the tree of life.*  
 Tree of Life.

## R E M A R K.

When it fell in my way in the second Letter  
 you had from me upon this subject, to remove  
 such Difficulties as some fancy they have found  
 to attend the Tree of Life; I declared it in my  
 opinion more probable that the Fruit of that  
 Tree conferr'd Life *Sacramentally*, than *Efficaci-*  
*ously*. Against which Notion I know of no Ex-  
 ception, unless one be thought by some capable  
 of being extracted out of the three last Verses  
 above-written. Here it seems at first sight, say  
 they, as if its manner of conferring Life was *Es-*  
*ficacious*; for if it was *Sacramental*, the conse-  
 quence of the Fruit eaten, as to the conferring  
 of Life, depended immediately upon the opera-  
 tion of God Almighty; and therefore tho' *Adam*  
 did eat it, it could have no effect without God's  
 extraordinary concurrence; as in the case of con-  
 ferring Grace upon all worthy Receivers of the  
 Blessed Sacrament; whereas *Adam* is order'd to  
 be kept from it, lest he eat it; this looks as if it  
 had a power to contribute *efficaciously* to the con-  
 tinuance of human Life. In answer to which it  
 must



must be consider'd, that what relates to it in these Verses is absolutely *sarcastical*; playing upon the Folly of our first Parents in their believing that did they eat of the forbidden Fruit they should become much wiser than they were, knowing Good and Evil: Now, says God, lest out of a like vain expectation of Eternity, they take and eat of the Fruit of the Tree of Life, they shall be turn'd out of the Garden; not that the latter should confer Life upon 'em of it self, any more than the former did a Likeness of God; but designing to turn 'em out of *Paradise* which they had forfeited, and which they had now render'd themselves unfit for; he gives 'em this *sarcastical* reason of their expulsion, in order to remind 'em upon what account they lost it; and to let 'em see what great Folly they were guilty of in doing what depriv'd 'em of it. This reason given by God may not hold, being not design'd so to do, but be purposely made weak, as if fitted for Man who was taken by as weak in the Devil's Delusion. If this answer does not remove this Difficulty in your eye, you may believe that the Fruit of the Tree was *efficacious* in conferring Life; there is nothing to be said against such a Supposition; neither is the other preferable to it upon any account, only that had it took effect, it seems as if it would have been attended with moral Consequences of greater use.

And now I think I have said what is sufficient to *vindicate the Historical Construction of the Mosaic account of the Fall of Adam*. I have demonstrated that it has as good as or a better right than any other History in the World to be taken in its obvious Construction *a priori*; and I have shewn that if we Christians turn it into a *Parable* or *Hieroglyphic*, such a conversion is attended with the worst of Consequences. I have answer'd all the Exceptions which have been made by light Men against its Historical Construction: And, methinks, if we put these things together, they absolutely rescue this noble Piece of  
Divine

Divine Revelation out of the hands of those Dreamers who would take away its fix'd sense, and thereby expose it for any sense at all, to the mercy of the weak Head and wild Imagination of every hot Enthusiast. I have no more to add in favour of what I contend for upon this Subject; unless it be this; That, whereas, if this account of the Fall is *Mythologically* expounded, it becomes useless and of no consequence; if it is *Historically* constr'd, it discovers to us several weighty Particulars which the wisest Heathens could not find out either by Reason or any other Assistances; as I have intimated in the Remark upon the 16th and some following Verses of this third of *Genesis*. So that we have all the Evidence in the world, and Motives which can be desir'd, to make us look upon the *Mosaic* account of the Fall of Adam as capable of being *Historically* constr'd. We have what highly favours such a Construction *a priori*, being able so to demonstrate that the subject matter it treats of is Matter of Fact; an Evidence which not many Histories in the World besides it self can pretend to; and thence, and from its simplicity of dress, we rationally deduce its Historical Construction; We have Arguments *ab absurdo* supposing the contrary in favour of the same Truth, being able to deduce the greatest Absurdities from the very supposition that it won't admit of such an Interpretation. These are sufficient to vindicate it with reasonable Men whatever Difficulties attend it; even tho' these Difficulties are incapable of being remov'd; Nay there are no Difficulties attending that Construction I contend for, but what I have remov'd; certainly then the Nicest can't scruple its Historical Construction; especially considering farther what noble Discoveries in it are made if *Historically* constr'd. All which put together evince, in my opinion, to an unexceptionable Demonstration what I contend for: *The Reasonableness, nay Necessity, of the Historical or Vulgar Exposition of the Mosaic account of the Fall of Adam.* I am,

S I R,

Yours, &amp;c.





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